Commentary

VOLUME NINETY-TWO • NUMBER FOUR • OCTOBER 1991

Communism, the Cold War & the Intellectuals

A Post-Mortem

Owen Harries
Martin Malia

Rape in Feminist Eyes

Norman Podhoretz

Counting the Jews

Edward Norden

"PC" So Far Dinesh D'Souza
Hispanics vs. Their Leaders Linda Chavez
Homage to Jacob Katz David Singer
Books in Review
Mark Falcoff / Jon D. Levenson /
David Brock / Edward Alexander / Joshua Muravchik

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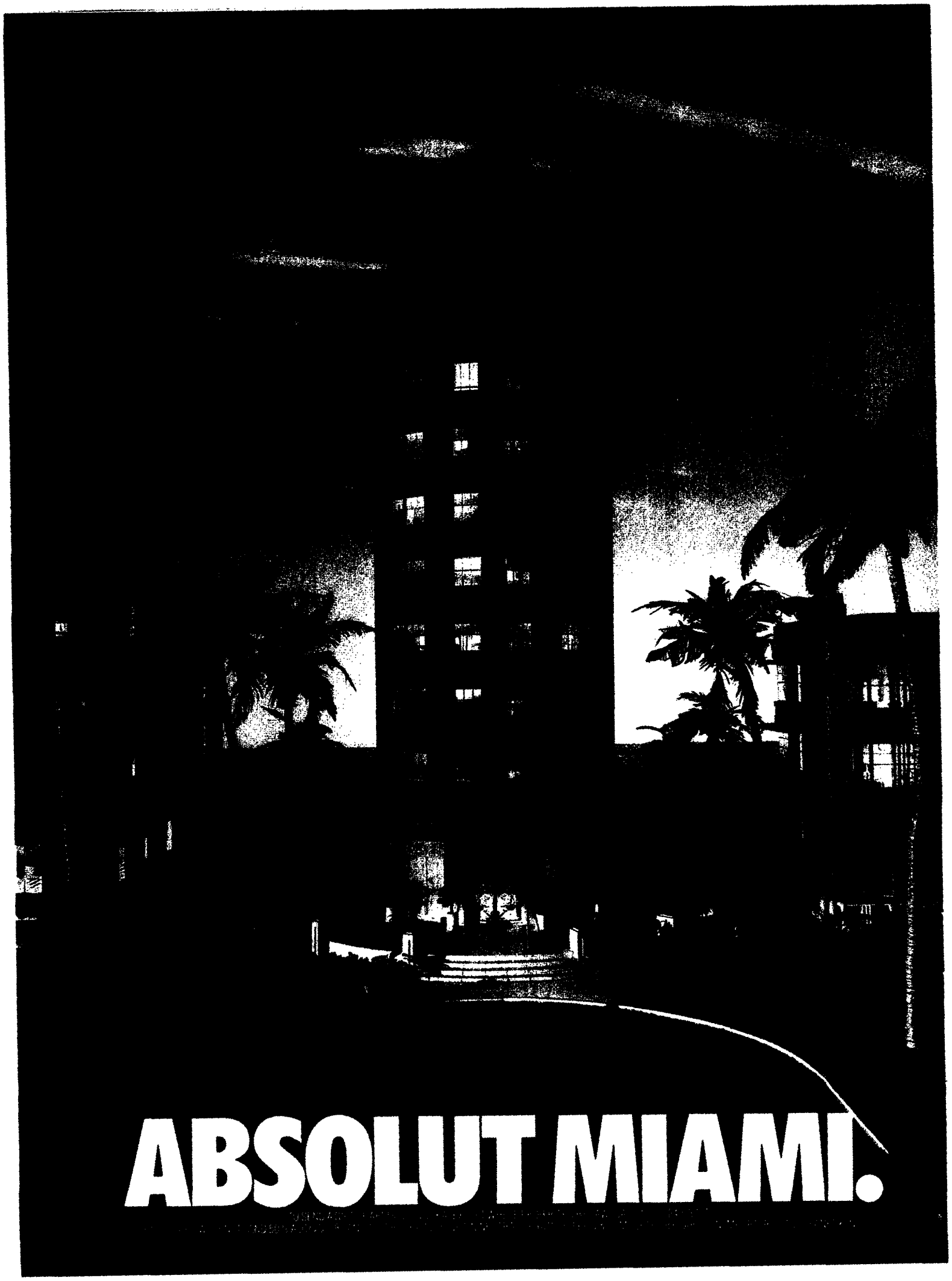

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VOLUME 92 NUMBER FOUR *OCTOBER 1991*

Articles
13 The Cold War & the Intellectuals *Owen Harries*
21 The Hunt for the True October *Martin Malia*
29 Rape in Feminist Eyes *Norman Podhoretz*
36 Counting the Jews *Edward Norden*
44 "PC" So Far *Dinesh D'Souza*
47 Hispanics vs. Their Leaders *Linda Chavez*

Observations
50 Homage to Jacob Katz *David Singer*

Letters
2 from *Robert B. Reich, Irwin M. Stelzer, Anya Taylor, H.W. Silverman, Harry V. Jaffa, Edward T. Oakes, Sheldon F. Gottlieb, Laurie Mylroie,* and others

Books in Review
52 Counsel to the President, by Clark Clifford *Mark Falcoff*
54 The Search for God at Harvard, by Ari L. Goldman *Jon D. Levenson*
57 Parliament of Whores, by P.J. O'Rourke *David Brock*
58 The Southern Connection, by Robert B. Heilman *Edward Alexander*
60 Why Americans Hate Politics, by E.J. Dionne, Jr. *Joshua Muravchik*

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Letters from Readers

Arguing About Economics

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In "Bad Advice for the Democrats" [July], Irwin M. Stelzer is so intent on championing his conservative economic orthodoxy ("the only map that has proved reliable—the low-tax . . . policies that produced the great Reagan boom of the 1980's") that he completely misses the central point of my new book, *The Work of Nations*: the Reagan boom excluded most Americans. Non-supervisory workers, constituting about two-thirds of the workforce, lost almost 11 percent of their inflation-adjusted earnings during these years.

Contrary to Mr. Stelzer's caricature of my argument, I do not "blame" America's top wage earners—whose income has surged in the opposite direction during the 1980's—for the slide of their compatriots. Mr. Stelzer takes me to task for calling the top fifth "fortunate" instead of "most able" or "most productive." At several points in the book I point out that the top fifth of wage earners were fortunate to have received a good education, and their children are fortunate to live in townships that can afford good schools, libraries, and parks. But I also use the adjectives "talented," "skilled," and "highly productive" to describe the top earners.

The income gap is widening primarily because, as I explain in my book, the global economy is exerting a centrifugal force on America—as it is on other advanced nations. Problem-solvers with good educations are in ever greater demand. Unskilled workers, however, are finding themselves in direct competition with millions of other similarly unskilled workers from around the world, the vast majority of whom are eager to work for a fraction of the American blue-collar wage. The immutable forces of supply and demand are pushing up the wages of the first group while pushing down the wages of the second. Here, Mr. Stelzer displays a remarkable innocence when he argues that, since exports still account for less than 7 percent of U.S. gross national product, "we retain substantial ability to manage our own economic affairs" and that "the linkages which economists like to think they know exist among deficits, interest rates, exchange rates, and other variables may not exist at all. . . ." On what planet has Mr. Stelzer been living? The relevant facts are that 70 percent of the goods produced in the United States are now in direct competition with goods produced outside the United States, American firms now sell over $1 trillion worth of goods and services outside the United States each year (about four times our exports), and the United States now depends largely on foreign capital to finance its deficits.

These trends began before Ronald Reagan entered the White House, of course, but Mr. Stelzer's "great Reagan boom" accelerated them in three unfortunate ways. First, it pushed the dollar so high that many American manufacturers were forced to close down or set up shop abroad. Second, it created a massive budget deficit by cutting taxes and simultaneously pouring hundreds of billions of dollars into Caspar's giant war machine. Third, and perhaps most mischievous in the long run, it cut federal aid to education by a third, slashed spending on highways and other infrastructure, eroded commercial research and development, and decimated workforce training.

My solution is emphatically *not* to embrace protectionism, nor to add to "an ever-longer list of social programs," as Mr. Stelzer asserts. Had he actually read my book he would have noted that I want to reverse the trend of disinvestment in the bottom two-thirds of the American workforce, and thus enable all Americans to become productive participants in the emerging world economy. (Another Stelzer mischaracterization: I don't mislead the "unwary" reader about educational expenditures. I carefully explain why the slower rate of increase in such expenditures on kindergarten through 12th grade since the 1970's has in effect resulted in a decline in the nation's educational assets—since, for example, talented women now have many high-paying job options other than teaching.)

It is one thing to write a polemic masquerading as a book review. *The Work of Nations* is, after all, intended to stimulate debate about the nation's future. But is is quite another thing to write a diatribe

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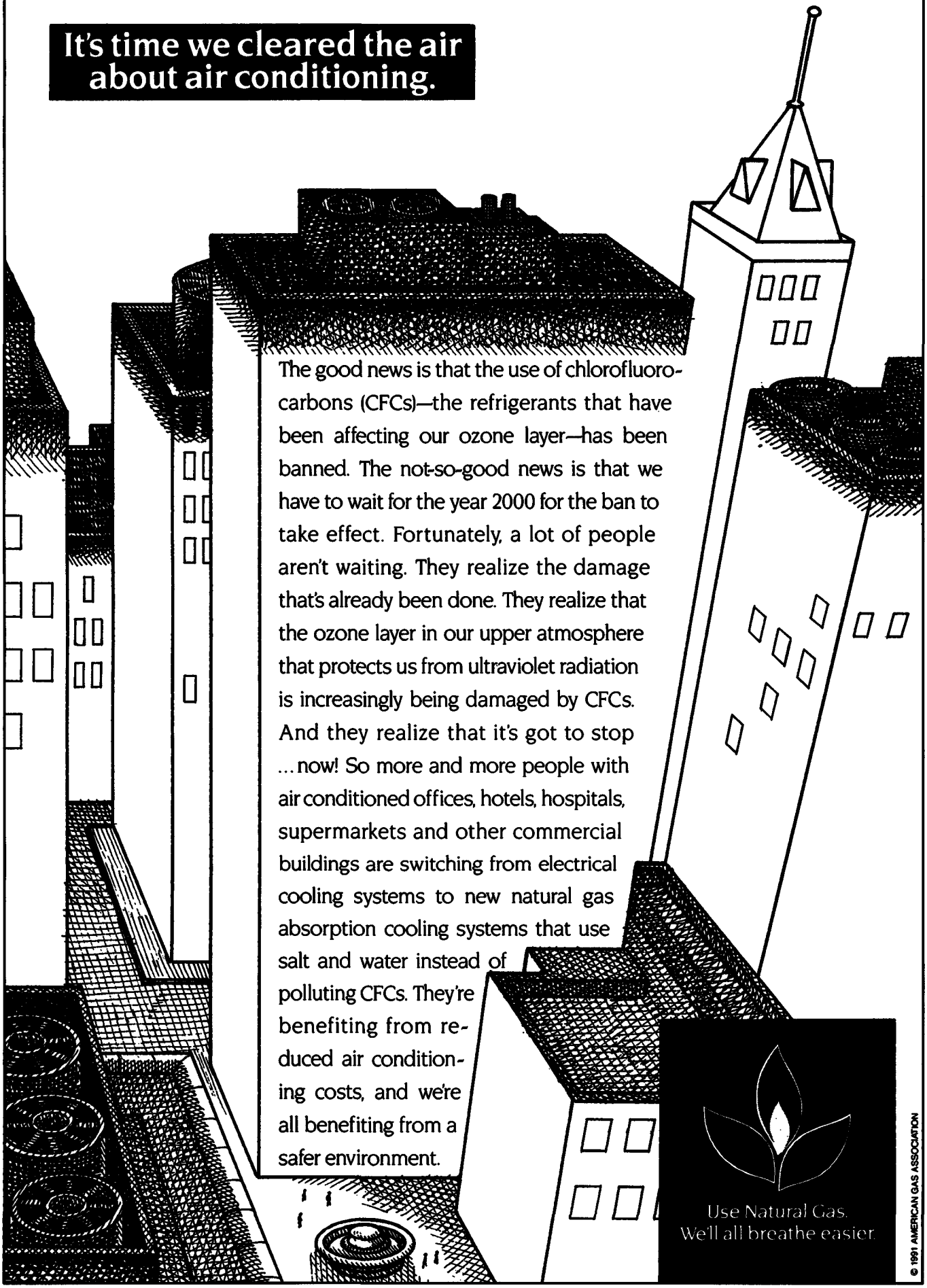
It's time we cleared the air about air conditioning.



The good news is that the use of chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs)—the refrigerants that have been affecting our ozone layer—has been banned. The not-so-good news is that we have to wait for the year 2000 for the ban to take effect. Fortunately, a lot of people aren't waiting. They realize the damage that's already been done. They realize that the ozone layer in our upper atmosphere that protects us from ultraviolet radiation is increasingly being damaged by CFCs. And they realize that it's got to stop ...now! So more and more people with air conditioned offices, hotels, hospitals, supermarkets and other commercial buildings are switching from electrical cooling systems to new natural gas absorption cooling systems that use salt and water instead of polluting CFCs. They're benefiting from reduced air conditioning costs, and we're all benefiting from a safer environment.

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masquerading as a polemical book review. Mr. Stelzer apparently doesn't know the difference.

ROBERT B. REICH
Harvard University
Cambridge, Massachusetts

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Irwin M. Stelzer is wrong in asserting that ". . . even the most ardent believers in free markets acknowledge that regulation is necessary where competition is absent or highly imperfect." Economists of the Austrian school argue that there can be no significant or lasting monopolization without government intervention, and that any attempts by government to regulate the economy so as to prevent monopolies or to increase competition will be counterproductive. As Ludwig von Mises stated (in *Human Action*):

> The monopoly problem mankind has to face today is not an outgrowth of the operation of the market economy. It is a product of purposive action on the part of governments. It is not one of the evils inherent in capitalism, as the demagogues trumpet. It is, on the contrary, the fruit of policies hostile to capitalism and intent upon sabotaging and destroying its operation.

More recently, for example, Professor D.T. Armentano of the University of Hartford has written extensively on the need to repeal all antitrust laws in this country. Two of his books within the past decade which I would recommend to Mr. Stelzer are *Antitrust and Monopoly: Anatomy of a Policy Failure* (1982) and *Antitrust Policy: The Case for Repeal* (1986).

Despite this emphatic exception, I find myself in agreement with the rest of Mr. Stelzer's article and I thank him for it.

L. HATZILAMBROU
Rockville, Maryland

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Although Irwin M. Stelzer provides a withering criticism of Robert B. Reich's *The Work of Nations* and Robert Kuttner's *The End of Laissez-Faire*, he fails to categorize them according to their historical antecedent, Italian fascism. The Kuttner/Reich prescriptions for a highly regulated economic system organized along cartel lines with large doses of social welfare are so reminiscent of Mussolini's corporate state of the 1920's as to be nearly indistinguishable from it. One might object that the U.S. would still have a democratic system under the Kuttner/Reich proposals. However, with the rise of the professional politician and the increasing importance and power of the "iron triangles" (politicians, bureaucrats, special interests), this point is debatable at best. The professional politician is of central importance here, as Alan Ehrenhalt has demonstrated in his new book, *The United States of Ambition: Politicians, Power, and the Pursuit of Office* (Random House). As currently constituted, the political system strongly favors the professional politician with a fascist (in the Italian sense) bent. Indeed, one can make a convincing case that despite Ronald Reagan, a type of proto-fascism is here now and that full-blown fascism is the system of the future. Mussolini lives!

ROBERT C. WHITTEN
Cupertino, California

IRWIN M. STELZER writes:

I am sorry Robert B. Reich feels that I completely missed the central point of his book: I did make a heroic effort to understand what he was saying. I thought it was that he is unhappy with the effects of the internationalization of markets on some members of the workforce, and with what in his letter he terms "the immutable forces of supply and demand" and I would prefer to call a market economy. So he proposes what I called "an ever-longer list of social programs" to moderate or offset the consequences of free markets. This latter Mr. Reich now denies, saying that I have not actually read his book.

I did. Perhaps he has forgotten pages 312-14 where he calls for "public spending within each nation in any manner that enhanced the capacities of its citizens to lead full and productive lives—including pre- and postnatal care, child care, and preschool preparation, excellent primary and secondary education, access to college regardless of financial condition, training and retraining, and good infrastructure." And that's just the beginning. Mr. Reich's list goes on to include "public subsidies" to high value-added firms, "relocation assistance, extra training grants, . . . regional economic aid," and more. I assume that the Robert Reich who makes these proposals is the same one who wrote the letter "emphatically" denying that he proposes new social programs.

Mr. Reich is also offended that I make a point of his use of the word "fortunate" to describe high earners. But his letter goes on to repeat that they are "fortunate" (his word, which my *Oxford English Dictionary* says means favored by chance, or luck) to have been to good schools and live in good neighborhoods. My quarrel is not semantic, but substantive. It goes to the question of incentives, of the relation of reward to work. Surely, some children go to better schools than do others. Why? Because, first, their parents can afford it. Why? Usually because they worked hard to be able to make these advantages available to their children. Were such advantages automatically available, at no obvious cost, the incentive to work would be reduced—so, too, national wealth. Ask first-generation Eastern European turn-of-the-century immigrants, or recent refugees from Asian totalitarianism, why they work so hard, and they will tell you that it is so their children can be brought up in nice neighborhoods, attend good schools, and go to college.

A second reason for the lamentable disparity in educational opportunity is, no surprise, ignored by Mr. Reich. The unhealthy alliance of liberals and trade unions has stymied efforts to empower the poor by giving them the education vouchers that would permit them to escape the clutches of the education bureaucracy by attending a school of their own choosing. Good schools would drive out bad, producing an equality of educational opportunity that no amount of public spending on the existing, failed system can hope to achieve. To lay the failure of the education system at Ronald Reagan's door requires a bit of a stretch: look, instead, to those who deny parents and students freedom of choice.

Now to Mr. Reich's contention that "The Reagan boom excluded most Americans." Note, first, that Mr. Reich does not deny that the economy did "boom." The 92-month Reagan expansion that began in November 1982 saw real GNP rise at an annual rate of 4.2 percent, exports double, and real per-capita after-tax incomes soar by almost 20 percent, 2.5 times the rate of increase in 1973-80.

The question of whether "most Americans" were excluded from this unprecedented prosperity is a bit more difficult. Anyone who has waded through the welter of statistics on income trends in the 1980's

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will know that the facts are far from clear. The data showing how the workforce as a whole, and its various components, fared during the Reagan years are complicated by two major problems. First, Reagan's critics measure performance from the 1979 peak, while his defenders say the recession in the early years of his first term was needed to wring out the double-digit inflation left as Carter's legacy. Reaganites therefore use 1982 as their base year, a fact that increases measured gains by 1988.

More important, the income statistics are difficult for the non-specialist to comprehend. Trends in weekly wages obscure the effect of the length of the work week; also, wages don't include increasingly important nonwage benefits such as health care and pensions. Perhaps the best effort to sort through the data is Marvin Kosters's recent piece in *American Enterprise*. Kosters finds that total compensation (including wages and benefits) rose during the 80's for all groups, with white-collar and service-industry workers leading the way. Blue-collar and union workers did less well, but did keep pace with inflation. Keep in mind: production workers in manufacturing now account for only about 10 percent of the workforce.

In short, the 11-percent decline in "inflation-adjusted earnings" referred to by Mr. Reich in his letter must refer to cash wages, only a part of total compensation, and for only part of the workforce. Overall, many workers saw their real incomes rise, while some held their own. Family incomes also rose, as expanding job opportunities and changing social attitudes increased the number of wage earners per household.

The net effect of the Reagan years on income distribution is even more difficult to describe, if the ultimate goal is to formulate policy proposals. It does seem that the top earners received a slightly larger share of the total at the end of the Reagan years than they had at the beginning. But it also seems that the incomes of the bottom fifth of households (42 percent of whom own their own homes) rose during the Reagan recovery period—by 15 percent in real terms. The rich got richer, and so did the poor. And, as the *Economist* (March 23) has pointed out, "The effective federal tax rate for the poorest 20 percent of people has fallen below 1977's level—despite growing payroll taxes." This is due in part to the Reagan tax reforms, in part to his successor's increase in the earned-income tax credit. True, the rich benefited from trading their tax breaks for lower rates, but not at the expense of the poor, many of whom were lopped off the tax rolls completely.

But all of this provides little guide for public policy, since such factors as the aging of the population, the increased importance of single-member households, and other social trends affect the income-distribution figures far more than does the occupant of the White House. What the latter can affect is the overall rate of economic growth, a factor driven by monetary and fiscal policy, the impact of regulation, trade policy, and economists-know-not-what-else. As some Democrats are starting to grasp, the best route to higher living standards for all income groups is economic growth, not an obsessive concern with taking from one group to give to another.

I know of no sure way to cut through the tangle created by the multiplicity of statistical series on wages, incomes, and the like, all of which anyhow only imperfectly measure what we are really arguing about—living standards. But I can offer a possible proxy: the voting patterns of "most Americans," so hard hit by Reaganomics according to Mr. Reich. Surely, American voters would not have returned Ronald Reagan to office if they thought he had impoverished them, or elected his chosen successor over a Reichian candidate who tried to persuade them they had become worse off since retiring Jimmy Carter. Unless one believes that Reagan was the opiate of the masses, blurring their ability to understand their own best interests, one must conclude that most people knew they were better off electing Reagan-Bush, and likely to remain so, than voting for Carter's inflation, Mondale's growth-stifling taxes, or Dukakis's Massachusetts miracle—all embedded in Mr. Reich's prescriptions for what he feels ails us.

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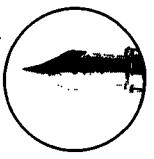

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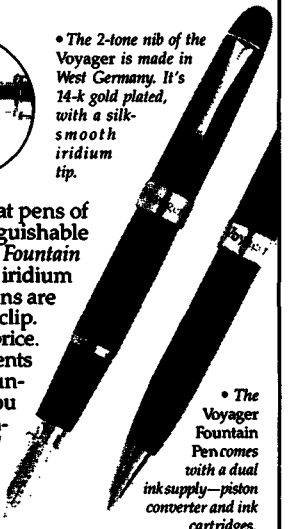

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point that where poverty exists, where helpless children or others fall through society's safety net, we should repair that net. But we must do so in ways that do not sap the drive to become self-sufficient, or raise tax rates so much as to reduce tax receipts. We must, in short, discriminate, learning the lessons that Charles Murray's *Losing Ground* and the failure of so many well-intentioned programs of the past teach us.

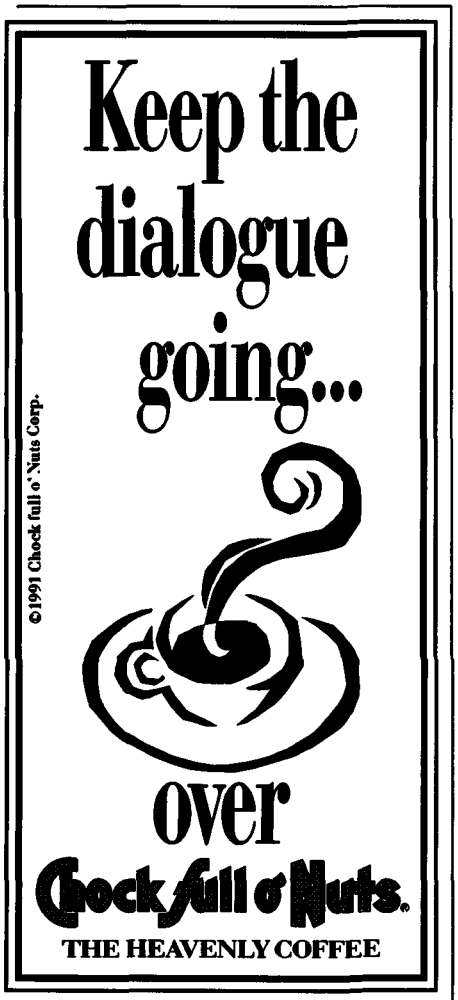
I won't here go into Mr. Reich's objection to the Reagan arms build-up, dispassionately referred to by him as "pouring billions of dollars into Caspar's giant war machine." It does not seem excessively warlike to argue that the changes Gorbachev made in Soviet policy were due, in some part, to his realization that his economy was no match for ours in producing military goods while at the same time meeting the needs of the consumer sector. If the obliteration of the Berlin Wall, freedom for Soviet satellites, and victory in the cold war have not persuaded Mr. Reich that our defense outlays were money well spent, I certainly can't. But I also can't resist pointing out that only four years ago, in his *Tales of a New America*, Mr. Reich derided the arms race because it "can be won only in ways that are implausible (we agree to become Communists or they agree to become capitalists). . . ." By that definition, it seems not unfair to say that we won.

Nor can I hope to persuade Mr. Reich that the amount of cash one is willing to spend on his pet programs may not be the test of one's devotion to such programs. Spending more dollars on incompetent teachers who work under a cash-gobbling bureaucracy is not the surest path to educational excellence, and a willingness to pour money into welfare programs that perpetuate dependency does not necessarily conduce to the welfare of the poor.

Mr. Reich also accuses me of "remarkable innocence" (long lost, I fear) for saying we retain substantial ability to manage our economic affairs. Note that in my article I very carefully acknowledged "increasing interdependence," and congratulated Mr. Reich (and Robert Kuttner) for having "neatly described" it. But I said, correctly I think, that they take the argument too far when they paint America as an impotent giant, waiting helplessly for the latest tick of the Nikkei index or the latest pronouncement of the Bundesbank. Of course, we cannot pursue an autarkic economic policy. But neither are we without considerable freedom in setting our own course; witness the relative strength of the dollar in the face of falling interest rates and rising budget deficits. Indeed, there is an emerging school of thought that the globalization theme has been much overdone. The widely respected David Henderson, head of the economics department of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), recently concluded that "The world economy in July 1991 is clearly further from full integration than it was in July 1914."

Mr. Reich's strident tone is, I suspect, as much a result of his inability to recommend a coherent liberal program as it is of my modest criticisms of his book. His cures for the ills he feels afflict us cost money, massive amounts of it. He sees no way of getting this money, since the American public refuses to leave us defenseless in a still-dangerous world, or pay more taxes to permit bureaucrats to pursue failed programs. He would like to load the costs of social programs on American businesses, but fears they will become uncompetitive in international markets. And he deplores the solutions being worked out by individuals, who reject bigger government in favor of what must surely seem to him to be a creeping privatization of social services: private schools, private garbage collection, private police protection. If he can let off a little steam by accusing me of not reading his book, or of championing a conservative economic orthodoxy, no harm done. But if he persuades the Democrats to join him on his diving board and leap into an empty pool, the nation will forfeit the possibility of an election in which it might be offered a coherent alternative to existing policies.

A word about L. Hatzilambrou's kind letter. I fear he is wrong, in part: there indeed can be and often have been cases where competition is so imperfect as to require regulation if persistent monopoly profits are to be avoided; electricity distribution comes to mind. And repeal of the antitrust laws would be a foolish abdication of government's legitimate responsibility to prevent monopolizing behavior and the exercise of monopoly power. Governments should not be players in the economic game; but they should be referees, assuring that the best man wins. True, most private monopolies eventually erode, but "eventually" can be decades, during which monopoly profits accrue and inefficiencies mount.



Coleridge Defended

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Edward Alexander's search for anti-Semites among early 19th-century humanist writers ["George Eliot's Rabbi," July] unearthed the wrong man in Samuel Taylor Coleridge, who was a philo-Semite, devoting many pages of *The Friend* to his belief that the early Hebrews were far more cultivated, literary, and individualistic than the early Greeks (*Friend* 1, 501-24, ed. Barbara E. Rooke [1969] in *The Collected Coleridge*, vol. 4); translating Hebrew hymns with his friend and collaborator Hyman Hurwitz; and writing the following paean to

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individual liberty in *The Courier*, June 18, 1816:

> If it be true that the Senate of Lubeck have ordered the Jews settled there to leave that city, we can only remark that Lubeck deserves to be deprived of her title and privileges as a free and independent city. In the first place, it is a direct violation of the 16th Article of the German Confederation, by which it is declared that the Jews should continue in the full enjoyment of all their present rights and privileges, and await a further decision. In the second place, it is a shocking outrage upon the principles of humanity and hospitality. It is not pretended that this expulsion is for any crimes committed. But even that charge could not apply to a whole community—to the aged, the infirm, the female, and the infant. We have ever thought that the treatment which the Jews have received has been a disgrace to all countries and to all nations. The fate of never having a home—of being a people without a people's country—of being dispersed over every part of the world, is hard enough. But to have superadded the fate of being treated as criminals and outcasts—of having the punishment of guilt without the commission of guilt—of having their very names pass into a synonym for all that is bad and tricking, and false and foul—to be the mock and scorn of the rabble—to have "the very dogs bark at them" as they pass, is a degree of suffering to which no race were ever exposed from the creation of the world. And this has been their lot for ages. If they have been hard and griping in their dealings, may it not have been occasioned by the treatment they have received? To treat men as if they were incapable of virtue is to make them so. If it be said that the Almighty has decreed them to be wanderers and outcasts, we reply that that Divine Being has nowhere told us to persecute them. If we wish to make them Christians, is persecution the best method? Is the severe treatment they have received from Christians the most likely way to dispose them in favor of the Christian Religion? We trust that a better and a kinder system will be adopted, and that if the age we live in, be in deeds, and not only in words, the enlightened age it is said to be, it will be shewn in a juster treatment of the Jews (*Essays on his Own Times*, ed. David Erdman [1978], 3, 144-5 in *The Collected Coleridge*, vol. 3).

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Rabbi David Wolpe,
University of Judaism, Los Angeles
Does Judaism believe in a personal God? One of compassion and love? Explore midrashic texts and other aspects of the Jewish tradition.

December 8
What Kind of State is the Jewish State?
Rabbi Irwin Kula, CLAL
Explore the contradictions and paradoxes facing Israel: a modern, ostensibly secular nation state that calls itself Jewish. Explore relations between religious and secular Jews, the status of Arab citizens and more.

January 26
The Holocaust in Historical Perspective
Dr. Yehuda Bauer,
Hebrew University
Why does the Holocaust continue to influence Western civilization? Are we afraid it can happen again? How does it affect faith in God and humanity?

February 9
Jewish Literacy:
The Most Important Things to Know About the Jewish Religion, Its People and Its History
Rabbi Joseph Telushkin, author
Develop your Jewish cultural literacy. 75 terms, concepts, events and people of Jewish history illuminated through anecdotes, folklore and scholarship.

February 23
Traditional and Critical Approaches To the Study of Talmud: selections on Business Ethics, Mourning and Procreation
Dr. Judith Hauptman,
Jewish Theological Seminary
How is Talmud study different in Orthodox, Conservative and Reform study? The subtleties of Talmudic criticism revealed through analysis of passages on business ethics, mourning and procreation.

March 22
Everyday Life in Biblical Times
Colonel Itzhak Itzhaki,
Bible educator and 21-year veteran, Israeli Defense Forces
Was Biblical Law theoretical or part of daily life? How did it fit into family life? Col. Itzhaki journeys back with slides, lectures and his own archaeological discoveries to reveal the family, economic and communal lives of the ancients.

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Even the sentence that Mr. Alexander cites on the contrast between Isaiah's sublime prayers and the old-clothes merchant's advertising call is one illustration among many of Coleridge's lifelong criticism of the materialism of his own era, which deprives people of all classes, religions, and ethnic groups of spiritual exaltation.

ANYA TAYLOR
Department of English
John Jay College of Criminal Justice—CUNY
New York City

EDWARD ALEXANDER writes:

My article was not, of course, a "search for anti-Semites" among early 19th-century English writers. A slight acquaintance with these "humanists" (ranging from the foul-mouthed William Cobbett to the golden-tongued William Blake, who called the Hebrew Bible "only an Example of the wickedness & deceit of the Jews") would reveal to Anya Taylor that very little searching is required. I referred to Coleridge not as an anti-Semite, but as someone for whom Jewish spiritual existence, which he thinks summed up in the religion of the "Old Testament," ceased when Christianity arrived; someone who believed that in 1833 a Christian could hear Isaiah but a Jew could not; someone who failed to imagine, or was too lazy to find out, that the old-clothes peddler, Levi of Holywell Street, when not peddling, could and did hear and speak exalted Hebrew words. Nothing that Anya Taylor quotes from Coleridge's laudable defense of Jewish civil rights shows his knowledge of the inner world of Jews to be any better than I suggested.

I would like to thank Dr. George Mandel, the English expert on Eliezer Ben-Yehuda, for pointing out to me in a private communication that (contrary to the Hebrew text I relied on) Ben-Yehuda was at school, not university, when he discovered *Daniel Deronda*, and that the discovery took place in the spring of 1877, not 1878.

Cherishing Our Elders

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

As a former academic now nearing the end of my legal career, I can empathize with Morris Freedman ["Retirement Blues," April]. If he has managed to illuminate one small speck of human endeavor by kindling the spark of learning in a single student (as was obviously done with him by his teachers), or in his writings, he has greatly succeeded.

It is, indeed, a sad commentary that the wealth of knowledge and experience of retired persons is not put to full use in our communities.

H. W. SILVERMAN
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

De Gustibus . . .

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

COMMENTARY, one of the finest publications in the United States, has descended to the gutter by publishing Ellen Sussman's story "Freddy and Me" [May], which rightfully belongs in *Playboy*. . . .

CORDELIA STRASSENGER
Baltimore, Maryland

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Ellen Sussman's "Freddy and Me" forces us to examine in new ways the unique effects real or perceived anti-Semitism may have on each of us. I look forward to more of Miss Sussman's work.

IRENE SAGOTSKY
Somerset, New Jersey

Anti-Semitism

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Jacob Katz, in "Accounting for Anti-Semitism" [June], observes that

> The term anti-Semitism made its first appearance in Germany in the fall of 1879. It was introduced into public discourse by Wilhelm Marr, one of the leading figures in an anti-Jewry campaign. . . . The men who coined and propagated it wished to convey the idea that their objection to Jews had nothing to do with traditional Jew-hatred.

More than forty years ago, I learned from Leo Strauss that "anti-Semitism" was coined by a "bashful Jew-hater." I also remember his saying that this coinage belonged to the attempt to cloak race prejudice in the language of science. It is doubtful, however, that the concept of a Semitic race has any better foundation than that of an Aryan race—or of a white or black race. There are certainly Semitic languages, and peoples whose language is Semitic. Hebrew and Arabic are Semitic languages, although comparatively few Jews outside Israel are fluent in Hebrew. By any recognizable standard, most Jews are not Semites, and most Semites are not Jews. When someone said to Strauss that so-and-so was anti-Semitic, he used to respond, "You mean he does not like Arabs?" There is no logic whatever in the fact that "anti-Semitism" should refer exclusively to Jews, and I have often wondered why Jews should ever have been collaborators in the currency given to this nasty euphemism.

HARRY V. JAFFA
Claremont, California

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Jacob Katz offers his opinion as to the cause of the Holocaust. As the former owner of a bookstore in San Francisco containing more than 5,000 volumes of history and social science (donated, incidentally, by the poet Kenneth Rexroth), I have my own theory, based largely on Freud's *Civilization and Its Discontents* and the writings of Konrad Lorenz.

First, it is necessary to agree that civilization—city-based culture of farming and trading and money—was "invented" by the predecessors of the Jews, and that "civilization is Jewish."

Second, we have to understand that the growth of population over the whole earth requires and makes inevitable a world-system of ideology, politics, and trade—religious or non-religious, socialist or capitalist, whatever it might be called—and that all systems of civilization are "capitalist," that is, founded on commodity-production and the ideology necessary to make it function.

If these two assumptions are accepted, then the Holocaust is understood as, first, the hatred and resentment of civilized life by peoples coming into it out of savagery and primitivism. Thus we have hatred of the Jews, who appear to impose on mankind the rule of God and law, monogamy, the stringencies of money and debt, restricted physical movement in an animal preferring to roam free (the animal being man), and practices of business and trade needed to keep the system going in spite of the reluctance of most people to go along, to buy and work, to—in the words of James Joyce—"Puff the Blaziness On."

Christians also do the work of the Jews, of course—some of them Puritans, American businessmen on a great scale, others. Those Christians are hated too, but not as violently. . . .

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We have, then, hatred of the Jews because they practice the skills of civilized life with great energy and determination, and because others are trying to emulate them in creating a world order. Looked at in this light, the Holocaust is best understood as, in the words of B.F. Skinner, "a struggle between two very powerful racial-cultural groups as to which would dominate the Cosmos—the Germans and the Jews."

HORACE SCHWARTZ
Santa Rosa, California

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Jacob Katz's article seems to leave out direct references to the Bible while quoting from secondary sources such as the Babylonian Talmud.

According to the prophet Zechariah (Chapter 14), the Messiah will some day defeat the enemies of the Jews as He gathers "all nations against Jerusalem." But the outcome will be that "the Lord will smite all the peoples that have fought against Jerusalem." . . .

It seems to me that the prophecies relating to the vindication of Israel *vis-à-vis* the Gentiles should be considered as a reason for anti-Semitism. Most non-Jews, whether in Christendom, Islam, or wherever, do not look kindly upon the fulfillment of these prophecies and therefore are ultimately against the Jewish people. . . .

HERMAN C. BAADER
Allentown, Pennsylvania

JACOB KATZ writes:

Leo Strauss's ironic observation about the bashfulness of the man who invented the term "anti-Semitism"—covering over as it does a plain hatred of Jews—conforms with my own theory about the motivation behind its invention. My thanks to Harry V. Jaffa for drawing my attention to Strauss's perception, though to use it as an argument to refute anti-Semitism seems to me a futile exercise. In any case, the historian's task is not to refute anti-Semitism, but to understand it by tracing its emergence and development within a historical context. This I tried to do in my book, *From Prejudice to Destruction: Anti-Semitism 1700-1933*, though I could only hint at it in my COMMENTARY article.

My own method is contrary to what Horace Schwartz is obviously attempting in interpreting the phenomena on the basis of a preconceived theory, whether Freudian or otherwise. Such an interpretation may suit the philosopher's métier, but not the historian's.

And lastly, to have recourse to the hidden intentions of the prophets, as Herman C. Baader does, is the way of theologians or more precisely homilists, rather than historians.

Iraq Post-Mortem

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I found Laurie Mylroie's "How We Helped Saddam Survive" [July] quite useful in helping to understand how Desert Storm—that enterprise of "such great pitch and moment"—could have gone so awry after February 28, 1991, when prior to that date President Bush and his war cabinet had shown such finesse and subtlety. But because of an ill-considered fear of quagmire, we are now left with Saddam Hussein in power, the Kurds and Shiites of Iraq desolate, and all of Iraq still under the stranglehold of sanctions.

Despite the sharp analytic power of Miss Mylroie's article, as well as Elie Kedourie's "Iraq: The Mystery of American Policy" in the June issue, I thought they both failed to mention a key ingredient in the motivational mixture that prompted the President to call for a unilateral cease-fire on February 28: the nearly universal constraints of public opinion, both internationally and domestically, which would never have countenanced a march on to Baghdad. Had Bush announced at the outset of ground operations that the war would continue until Hussein were arrested for war crimes or the government overthrown, vast sections of public opinion throughout the world would have decried this contravention of international law; the Soviet Union would have been enraged; perhaps the coalition would have split apart; and Iraqis would have died in even greater numbers. In short, the wrath of liberal opinion, amplified by the organs of journalism, would have descended on the White House in all its wonted fervor.

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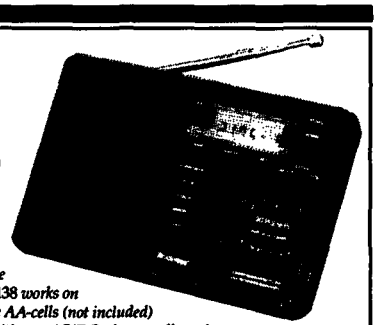

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Bush, however, did announce the cease-fire, and relief and elation swept the nation. But in fact that decision brought on an avalanche of chaos, threatening to involve the United States in the very quagmire it so wanted to avoid.

I think the lesson here is that we have made the long-suffering Iraqi population the victims of our tender anti-imperialist consciences. The standard boilerplate of the Left since World War II has been unanimous in holding that non-Western populations are downtrodden because they are the victims of Western imperialism. This theme has been hammered away at for so long it is now part of the instinctive mental furniture of virtually all shades of public opinion, especially of the foreign-policy elites who do so much to define the issue of international relations.

And yet why not consider the essence of the catastrophe visited upon Iraq after February 28 to be but the final denouement of a long-desiccated anti-imperialism? At least one liberal columnist, Robert Harris of the London *Sunday Times*, has had the courage to challenge his own received wisdom. In a column of April 14, 1991, he pointedly asked:

> Are not the Kurds in their wretched encampments, and the thousands still being imprisoned, tortured, and murdered in northern Iraq, paying the price for our tender consciences of two months ago? Are not the Kurds—and the Shiites in the south, for that matter—the victims not of our imperialism but of our anti-imperialism?

Are more yet to die in the name of anti-imperialism?

EDWARD T. OAKES, S.J.
Department of Near Eastern
Languages and Literatures
New York University
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

The opening sentence of Laurie Mylroie's "How We Helped Saddam Survive" expresses a concept I find exceedingly difficult to accept. . . . Today it appears to be *de rigueur* for anyone who wishes to discuss Desert Storm to praise it as "one of the most brilliant military operations in U.S. history." Yet my view is that Desert Storm was won more by Saddam's stupidity than by our brilliance.

Who would have believed that a military leader who had every military advantage would grant his adversaries a six-month period to build up sufficient numbers of troops and equipment in a huge land mass over which he could not maintain surveillance? One day we may learn why Saddam did not wait a few years—at least until he either had a nuclear bomb with which to carry out nuclear blackmail or germ warfare or both before attacking and conquering Kuwait; why he did not simply walk through Saudi Arabia; why he did not attack the ships and land installations during the early stages of the build-up; why he did not carry out maneuvers that could have potentially devastated the morale of the various troops during the period of intense heat; or why he did not undertake other activities which people with better military minds than mine could easily conceive. . . .

Was there ever any doubt that Iraq, whose battle-tested troops had fought only against Iran, would lose when faced with the greatest technological societies in the world and the military products of this technology? It was inevitable that once we had all the troops and equipment in place, we would "win" militarily. Given Saddam's inaction, it was predictable that our losses would be slight.

My negative response to Miss Mylroie's article was exacerbated by her continuous, vague references to unnamed high officials as sources from whom information was obtained. I have no way of independently assessing the veracity of such information.

I was further disturbed by the thrust of the article: it described the mechanisms used for assuring Saddam's survival without first analyzing why it was considered necessary to retain him in power.

From my perspective, answering the question of why we helped Saddam survive is relatively simple: we have no independent policy in the Middle East other than that dictated by oil interests. This means that our Middle East foreign policy is directed primarily at placating the Saudis and the oil interests and, secondarily, appeasing the dictates of other Arab states and the "Euro-Japanese" dependent upon them for oil. Thus, whatever the Saudis want, the Saudis ultimately get. The United States even entered the fray primarily at the urgent and frantic request of the Saudis—to whom we had sold vast quantities of advanced weapons and whose air force we had trained ostensibly so it could protect the Saudis from just such threats. The hypocrisy of the administration's statements that we committed American troops to Desert Shield/Desert Storm because of naked Iraqi aggression against a peaceful nation was, and still is, too much even for my strong stomach.

What I have said above also provides an answer to Miss Mylroie's closing question: "If we are prepared to accept [the] brutal carnage in Iraq, by what right do we mean to interpose ourselves and our 'good offices' in other bloody and controverted areas of the Middle East?" Oil-based economic interests and Saudi wishes when coupled—dare one say it?—with overt, vicious anti-Semitism existing in our highest elected and appointed officials are what give us the right "to interpose ourselves and our 'good offices'"—at least into any situation involving Israel. The events since the cease-fire support the contention that Secretary of State James Baker's and President Bush's irrational concentration on and continuous public browbeating of Israel, presumably in the cause of bringing peace to the Middle East, are designed to reward the Arabs for their role in Desert Storm. . . .

In light of all the events that have occurred since the cease-fire, I cannot help wondering: who are the winners, who are the losers?

SHELDON F. GOTTLIEB
Mobile, Alabama

LAURIE MYLROIE writes:

I would not dispute Edward T. Oakes's point that ill-conceived notions about the consequence of overt efforts to remove Saddam Hussein contributed to a decision to end the Gulf War without demanding his ouster. Even as the fighting concluded, expert opinion in Washington—although less so in academic circles—held that the Baath party reflected, more or less, the sentiments of Iraq's population, deemed to be "nationalistic" and anti-Western. Hence the argument that it would be counterproductive for the U.S. to try to remove Saddam, and that the Iraqis themselves should do the job. Yet six months later, the Iraqi population's main complaint is that the U.S. failed to finish the job, reflecting not the sentiments previously attributed to it, but a profound weariness of war and repression.

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Indeed, the situation is so paradoxical that members of the Baathist regime now criticize the American reluctance to offer support for democracy and human rights in Iraq.

But the question of leaving Saddam in power transcended the liberal-conservative divide. Figures from each camp stood on both sides of the debate. At stake was another issue—whether pragmatism is sufficient to define American goals. Can the U.S. promote a stable international order—as the Bush administration seeks to do—without also promoting a vision of justice that goes beyond upholding the sanctity of agreements reached among those who chance to dwell in the world's presidential palaces? Will not regimes founded on injustice and repression ultimately deal unjustly with their neighbors?

The ideological conservatives of the 1980's who won the cold war would have said yes. Margaret Thatcher has criticized the allies' failure to make Saddam's removal from office a condition of the ceasefire. Although Ronald Reagan has not spoken on Iraq, he has eloquently appealed for self-determination in the Soviet Union, condemning the notion that America should become involved in preserving "artificial states" run by "monarchs and dictators."

I am not convinced that Edward Oakes is justified in blaming public opinion for administration policy after the war's end. It is true that scenes on TV of the "highway of death" provoked an outcry, but the war's success gave the administration considerable latitude. Besides, even in terms of U.S. goals, the decimation of the Iraqi army fleeing Kuwait was problematic. The administration sought a coup—why then eliminate the army but let Republican Guard forces, with over 400 tanks, escape across the Euphrates, when it was known that the Guard was far more loyal to the regime than the army? Did that mistake come about because the prime Saudi candidate to launch a coup may have been an agent of the Iraqi regime, as Washington is now belatedly investigating?

In fact, the administration lagged behind the American public, which believes that leaving Saddam in power was an error, and others have done far more than it has to focus attention on Saddam Hussein's criminality. Congress recently heard testimony that all American POW's in Iraq were tortured. Why has the administration said nothing about this since the war's end? And what about war-crimes trials? Although the European Community called for them long ago, and the American Bar Association endorsed the idea in July, the administration remains uninterested—Washington's Middle East experts advised that such trials would only consolidate support for Saddam. Western leaders meeting at July's G-7 summit in London affirmed that Iraqis should "choose their leadership openly and democratically," but that is not U.S. policy. No senior U.S. official publicly advocates democracy in the Middle East, but presumably Mr. Bush could not explain that to the other leaders of the industrial world.

Saudi Arabia is part of the explanation for the peculiar U.S. posture. Sheldon F. Gottlieb is right that Riyadh had too much influence and that is what I meant to suggest. Back in March, for example, when National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft visited Riyadh, the Saudis complained that there was too much talk about democracy in Kuwait. "That's not why we fought the war," one official reportedly said. And not long after, on April 3, there appeared a story in the New York *Times* reporting that the U.S. was "not pressing Kuwait on reform."

And indeed, there is some truth to the official's remark. The administration fought the war not for democracy but to prevent Saddam Hussein from controlling half the world's oil, and Mr. Gottlieb should not underestimate the importance of what he calls "oil interests." The question, though, is whether the oil is really secure while Saddam remains in power and rickety monarchs, incapable of defending themselves and unwilling to have others do so, are left to continue their old ways. Since the war's end, there has been much revision of earlier predictions that U.S. forces would face prolonged combat and high losses, and Mr. Gottlieb now joins the foregone-conclusion brigade. But in fact the low level of casualties was testimony to the efficiency and elegance with which Iraq's considerable military capabilities were neutralized. As for his complaint about "vague references" to "high officials," they are quotes from the country's major newspapers and are fully cited in my *The Future of Iraq* (published by the Washington Institute for Near East Policy).

While President Bush continues to appeal in vain for a military coup in Baghdad, Saddam believes he can outlast the resolve of the international community to contain him. Indeed, it is easier to imagine Saddam Hussein in power five or ten years hence than it is to imagine an effective arms-control regime on Iraq enduring that long. Saddam is vengeful, perhaps very personally, against Bush himself. As an example of how we may yet witness the limits of the administration's pragmatism, consider that part of the reason for leaving Saddam in power was to attend quickly to the "peace process," the administration's top Middle East priority before and after the war. Yet even assuming the regional conference actually takes place, how difficult will it really be for Saddam to sabotage the pet project of his chief foe, as he did the earlier U.S.-PLO dialogue?

The aftermath of the Gulf War—that Saddam is left in power, that the administration steadfastly refuses to offer even moral support for democracy in the Middle East—suggests that the Palestinian question is far from the heart of the region's problems. Rather, the central issue is the failure to establish legitimate governments enjoying the support of their populations. The current American posture does little to address it.

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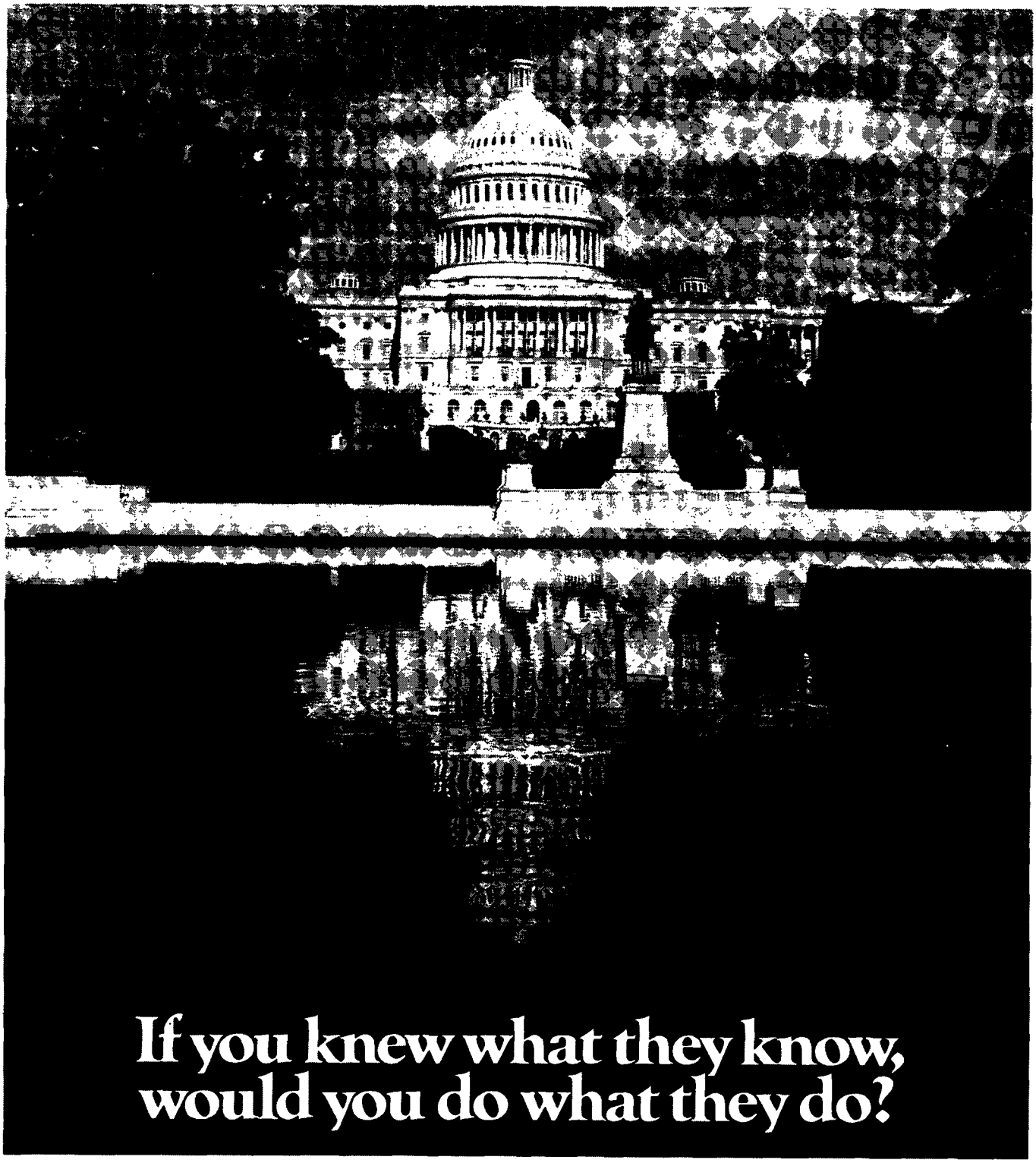

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The Cold War & the Intellectuals

"In Mockery of the Promise and Fitness of Things"

Owen Harries

AMERICANS are a future-oriented people, disinclined to dwell on the past. Since the cold war reached its abrupt and unanticipated end, their inclination has been to focus on what is to come next, whether it be a new world order, a democratic crusade, or simply a return to pre-totalitarian power politics. This temperamental inclination has been strengthened by what they are turning away from. The cold war went on for a long, long time. It was in many ways a dreary and monotonous conflict in which highlights were few and significant movement rare. After the first few years, the battle lines were clearly drawn, the positions static, the strategies fixed, and the official rhetoric known by heart. What a relief, then—especially for intellectuals, whose preferred game is interpreting the new—to turn away from it and to contemplate an international scene suddenly full of novelty, drama, and unpredictable movement.

And yet the cold war cannot be dismissed as something that is not only over but done with. As well as celebrating victory and trying to anticipate the future, we shall have to go back and think seriously about it again. It is not only that there are lessons to be learned from it, though there are. And it is not merely that there are questions to be answered, and that the way they are answered will determine the allocation of a significant amount of political credit and prestige—though there is that, and it is not negligible. It is that we simply have too much intellectual and moral capital invested in the cold war, have been too much shaped by it, to write it off as an episode that is no longer relevant.

Most of us have lived our entire adult lives until now against the background of the cold war. We have spent a great deal of our time reading, thinking, writing, and arguing about it. Because of its pronounced ideological component, it was a conflict that engaged intellectuals to an exceptional extent and that attached unusual importance to their opinions and loyalties; and as they were important to it, so was it important to them. Monotonous it may have been, but it was also momentous. As the Oxford philosopher Isaiah Berlin said of it while it was still going on, it was an open war "fought between two civilizations and two systems of ideas which return different and conflicting answers to what has long been the central question of politics—the question of obedience and coercion." In addition to that central question, the cold war raised serious issues and initiated bitter debates about the motives and intentions of the participants, the strengths and weaknesses of their conflicting ways of organizing human affairs, the wisdom of various policies and strategies.

Until very recently, all these arguments took place while the cold war was still in progress, its plot still unfolding and ourselves participants able to see it only from the inside. Only now, and for the first time, can we view it from the outside—can we, so to speak, walk around it and contemplate it as a finished thing. Instead of an ongoing story, it is a completed one whose ending is known; and knowing the ending casts a new light on earlier opinions and debates.

LOOKING back, what is striking is how rich in *irony* the whole cold-war experience was. Applied to a situation, as opposed to a mode of discourse, the *Oxford English Dictionary* defines irony as: "A condition of affairs or events of a character opposite to what was, or might naturally be, expected; a contradictory outcome of events as if in mockery of the promise and fitness of things." In terms of the sense of the promise and fitness of things that prevailed among Western intellectuals, the experience of the last 45 years rings with such mockery.

The cold war ended with a smashing victory for what we have come to think of naturally as the democratic-capitalist ideology and system, and the prestige of both ideology and system is now at an all-time high. Nothing would have seemed less likely to most intellectuals when the cold war began, or for a long time after that. Indeed, in

OWEN HARRIES is the editor of the *National Interest* and of the recently published *America's Purpose: New Visions of American Foreign Policy* (ICS Press).

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the 1940's the compatibility and interdependence of democracy and capitalism, so readily assumed today, were not generally accepted. On the contrary, they were widely considered to be at odds with each other, with capitalism working to destroy the equality and sense of community that were deemed conditions of genuine democracy, and democracy requiring a "fairness" and social justice that frustrated the reward system necessary to drive capitalism. So George Orwell could write in the preface to his allegorical novel *Animal Farm*, as if he were merely pointing to the obvious: "Yet one must remember that England is not completely democratic. It is also a capitalist country with great class privileges. . . ."

It is not an exaggeration to say that by the 1940's capitalism had substantially lost its legitimacy in the eyes of most Western intellectuals. The intervention of World War II and its vast impact on our imagination tend to exaggerate the historical space between the Great Depression and the beginning of the cold war. Yet only a few years separated them, and the stagnation, suffering, and despair of the 1930's were still very fresh memories at the time of Churchill's "iron-curtain" speech in 1946 and the proclamation of the Truman Doctrine in 1947. Many intellectuals continued to believe then, as most had believed a few years earlier, that the capitalist system was in terminal crisis, its days numbered. After all, insofar as there had been economic recovery, it had come about not as a result of any spontaneous self-correcting process but because of the demands created by war; so rather than contributing to the moral rehabilitation of the system, it tended only to confirm already established theories about the intimate connection between capitalism and war.

In 1945, one of Britain's leading historians, A.J.P. Taylor, was able to assure his BBC audience that

> Nobody in Europe believes in the American way of life—that is, in private enterprise. Or rather, those who believe in it are a defeated party, and a party which seems to have no more future than the Jacobites in England after 1688.

Orwell at this time routinely wrote off capitalism as a failed system which "has manifestly no future." For him, this was by no means to be viewed as an unmixed disaster. As he observed of the economist and political theorist F.A. Hayek in a review of the latter's famous attack on socialism, *The Road to Serfdom*,

> He does not see, or will not admit, that a return to "free" competition means for the great mass of people a tyranny probably worse, because more irresponsible, than that of the state. The trouble with competitions is that somebody wins them.

If Orwell is thought to be too singular to be representative, consider the views of his friend Cyril Connolly, an influential editor and man of letters. Connolly was essentially apolitical, with no serious ideological commitments, but he was the possessor of a fine nose for prevailing intellectual moods and trends (the novelist Evelyn Waugh, who also knew him well and observed him closely, thought him to be "the most typical man of his generation"). When Connolly came to consider England's position in the postwar world, he saw its destiny as that of "holding the balance between American capitalism and Soviet Communism, defending Western Europe from the reactionary imperialism of one and the oppressive bureaucracy of the other." This passage is interesting in at least three respects. First, and consistent with the popular and vulgarized Marxism which then passed for sophistication, it chose to characterize the West not in terms of democracy but of capitalism, readily accepting the primacy of the economic over the political. Second—and this is something it shares with the passage quoted earlier from Taylor—it carefully distanced itself from the capitalist cause by describing it as "American," as if Britain had really nothing much to do with the invention of capitalism. And third, it opted for neutrality and what Jeane Kirkpatrick was later to label the doctrine of "moral equivalence." Acceptance of that doctrine—and the flirtation with the concept of a "third force" that naturally went with it—were in fact much more prevalent in the early years of the cold war than they were to become in the post-Vietnam era. True, Orwell insisted that if one *had* to choose between Russia and America, there was no question that the latter was preferable. But the fact that he felt it necessary to make the point indicated the prevailing climate, and even he presented it as a matter of the lesser evil and rather desperately searched for a social-democratic "third force" that would relieve him of the necessity of making such an invidious choice.

When Connolly decided to close down his successful and influential magazine, *Horizon*, in 1949, the last sentence he wrote in his last editorial was:

> It is closing time in the gardens of the West and from now on an artist will be judged only by the resonance of his solitude or the quality of his despair.

The style may be a little florid for contemporary tastes, but it was to be a much-quoted sentence and may fairly be taken as reflecting the pessimism of a generation of Western intellectuals in the year in which, with the establishment of NATO, the cold war took its definitive shape. As the whole of Eastern Europe was already under Communist rule by this time, and as 1949 also saw the establishment of the People's Republic of China and the first testing of an atomic bomb by the Soviet Union, it was easy for a generation already seriously alienated from their values to conclude

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that circumstances justified deep pessimism concerning the prospects of liberal democracy and capitalism.

THE huge irony in all this is, of course, that those attitudes prevailed at the beginning of an epoch during which both capitalism and liberal democracy were to achieve spectacular and unprecedented success. In the four decades from 1950 to 1990, the gross national products of most capitalist countries doubled and doubled again, and the prosperity was broad-based. It was during these years that ordinary people throughout the Western world had their first real taste of affluence—when home ownership, higher education, access to decent medical care, vacations abroad, the ownership of automobiles, televisions, refrigerators, and washing machines all came to be normal rather than exceptional. All this happened, moreover, while the West was simultaneously bearing the burden of the cold war, devoting a great deal of its resources to the setting up of much-enlarged welfare states, and divesting itself of empires.

It is powerful evidence of the resistance of the ideological mindset to empirical evidence that, for a very long time, the prosperity that was plain to see all around made little impact on intellectual orthodoxy in the West. Undue attention was given to residual pockets of economic backwardness; new definitions of poverty were manufactured to sustain the case against capitalism, definitions that bore no relationship to the grinding conditions of only a generation before; the West was accused of basing its prosperity on the exploitation of the third world ("neocolonialism," "neoimperialism"), though the economies of many third-world countries—particularly those that most enthusiastically embraced the market economy—were also growing rapidly. When all else failed, comfortably off middle-class intellectuals followed the lead of the American economist John Kenneth Galbraith and attacked affluence itself for its crass materialism, vulgarity, and dependence on the creation of spurious wants. And at a time when the economies of the West were drawing away from those of Communist countries like an express train drawing away from a mule cart, Galbraith propounded his theory that the democratic-capitalist and Communist-totalitarian systems were actually converging—and was given a respectful hearing.

As far as the reputation of democracy was concerned, things were a little better, but not much. During the years when democracy was fighting for its life, Western academics subjected it to a behavioralist analysis that stripped it of most of its idealism, denied the validity of the notion of a common purpose, and stressed the centrality to the system of the self-serving preoccupations of competing interest groups. There was little interest in—and by implication little validity to—the classical "great issues." In the 1960's liberal democracy suffered a serious crisis of faith, when an adversary culture denounced and disrupted its institutions and mediated procedures, in the name of spontaneity, sincerity, and direct action. Initially mainly the vehicle of students, that culture quickly gained the support of many leading liberals. While this constituted the main betrayal of liberal democracy during the cold-war era, it is also true that many conservatives and dedicated cold warriors showed little confidence in the robustness of democracy, even as they defended it. Bewailing the absence of will, staying power, and seriousness of democratic societies, and emphasizing their divisiveness, capacity for illusion, and softness, conservatives were anything but happy warriors confident that their cause would triumph. They were motivated more by the fear of defeat than by the expectation of victory.

Liberal democracy survived and recovered from the assault of the counterculture, and in the mid-1970's—the overthrow of dictatorial regimes in Portugal and Spain are usually considered the starting point—democracy began to gain ground globally in what Samuel Huntington of Harvard identifies as a third significant wave of democratic advance in modern times.

This wave, like so many others, caught Western intellectuals entirely unprepared. The extent to which it did so may be gauged by the fact that Daniel P. Moynihan, one of the most perceptive of their number and one who was unambiguously committed to the democratic cause, was able to write in the tenth anniversary issue of the *Public Interest*, which appeared in 1975, that

> . . . liberal democracy on the American model increasingly tends to the condition of monarchy in the 19th century: a holdover form of government, one which persists in isolated or peculiar places here and there, and may even serve well enough for special circumstances, but which has simply no relevance to the future. It is where the world was, not where it is going.

Eight years later the French political commentator, Jean-François Revel, published a whole book—*How Democracies Perish*—devoted to the thesis that "Democracy may, after all, turn out to have been a historical accident, a brief parenthesis that is closing before our eyes."

Such, then, was the prevailing pessimism, and in some cases hostility, toward both capitalism and democracy—attitudes which persisted even into the later stages of the cold war. And yet the verdict of history was going decisively in the other direction. Even as liberal intellectuals continued to berate capitalism, the political leaders of the social-democratic and labor parties of the world, men subject to the practical test of winning votes in elections, were abandoning socialism and recognizing the superiority of the market economy. Even as the death knell of democracy was being

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sounded by intellectuals, it was rapidly gaining ground in Europe, Latin America, and Asia. Between the 10th and 25th anniversaries of the *Public Interest*—between, that is, 1975 and 1990—Huntington calculates that over 30 countries abandoned authoritarian regimes in favor of democratic ones.

OTHER ironies abound. While intellectuals maintained that the world was poised on a knife edge and traded in terms like "the delicate balance of terror" and "brinkmanship," and while the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* used as its logo a clock perpetually set at five minutes to midnight to signify the imminence of disaster, the cold war was in fact one of the most stable conflicts in history. Not only was there no world war, but after the first years, and with the possible exception of the Kennedy-Khrushchev conflict over Cuba, there was never any serious danger of one. Decades went by without a decently threatening superpower crisis. In Europe, the epicenter of the cold war, from the beginning to the end hardly a drop of blood was shed, not a foot of territory changed hands, not a frontier was violated. So exceptionally stable was the whole thing, in fact, that it may have left an unfortunate legacy of complacency, causing people who should know better to underrate the importance of stability or to take it for granted, an unfortunate attitude in a new age that gives every indication of being dangerously volatile.

A connected irony is evident in the attitudes toward nuclear weapons that prevailed during the cold war. It was those weapons that were supposed to make the "balance of terror" so delicate, and scribes like the scientist-novelist C.P. Snow solemnly and fatuously demonstrated the inevitability of nuclear war in a matter of a few years in the absence of general nuclear disarmament, while the aged philosopher Bertrand Russell sat on cold pavements to dramatize the cause. All in all, no other issue was given as high a priority by intellectuals during the cold war as "banning the Bomb." And yet it is surely true that it was only the existence of nuclear weapons that kept the cold war cold. Certainly it is difficult to think of another case in history where such a level of intense hostility, backed by massive and growing stocks of arms and sustained for such a lengthy period, did not result in active warfare; and it is also difficult to identify any factor other than the existence of nuclear weapons that can explain why this conflict was the exception. All this was clear to a Churchill well past his prime, when he spoke of the "process of sublime irony" by which the hydrogen bomb had brought mankind "to a stage where safety will be the sturdy child of terror, and survival the twin brother of annihilation." But it escaped most intellectuals.

Nuclear weapons also had one other effect that went largely unacknowledged: they and they alone kept the cost of the cold war within bounds and made it possible for the West to defend itself while also enjoying unprecedented prosperity and the expansion of welfare provisions. Though it became standard rhetoric to rail against the "insane waste" of nuclear weapons, they were in fact very cheap in comparison with conventional arms and troops, and they made it possible to balance Soviet military power with military budgets of well under 10 percent of GNP (under 5 percent for most countries other than the United States) for most of the cold war. Without nuclear weapons, the Western democracies could only have defended themselves by becoming hugely expensive garrison states with immense standing armies—which would have meant forgoing both prosperity and welfarism.

PERHAPS the most striking and interesting instance of the "mockery of the promise and fitness of things" in the whole cold-war experience is provided by the gap between the way Western intellectuals perceived Communist totalitarianism and what that system's dismal and feeble end revealed it to be. In a sense this represents a mirror image of how intellectuals got democracy wrong, though in this instance it was not only liberal intellectuals but conservatives and dedicated anti-Communists who were at fault.

From the beginning, conservatives stood in awe of totalitarianism and accepted uncritically the claims made for it both by its own spokesmen and by Western theorists and commentators. From Arthur Koestler's explanation of how men were brought to confess to treachery they had never committed; to George Orwell's terrible image of the future as "a boot stamping on a human face—forever"; to Hannah Arendt's discourse on "total domination," "total terror," and the "totally different" character of totalitarian government; to Whittaker Chambers's conviction that he was joining the losing side when he became an anti-Communist; to Jean-François Revel's gloomy observation that for a system that had so many failings to grow so strong must mean that it embodied "a principle of action and monopolization of power more effective than any mankind has ever known before"—all these sources, and more, impressed on the conservative imagination a concept of totalitarianism as almost irresistibly coherent, confident, efficient, penetrating, and dynamic. To it were attributed a vast and terrifying capacity to discipline, mobilize, and transform individuals and whole societies, its combination of messianic ideological appeal, unbridled use of terror, and deployment of modern technology and techniques seeming to represent power of an unprecedented order.

Besides being implacably powerful, totalitarianism—in crucial contrast to authoritarianism—was seen as virtually immutable and indestructible, except as the result of defeat in war (or,

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as George F. Kennan argued, the prolonged frustration of its expansionist drive) by an outside power. True, writers on totalitarianism usually included in the small print a theoretical recognition that one day it would die, in the sense that all things ultimately die, but the emphasis was always on its invulnerability, its capacity to control and manipulate, to atomize and crush. The theoretical allowance of ultimate mortality apart, the only change envisaged in the early, Stalinist days of the cold war, when the ideal type of totalitarianism was taken to approximate closely to the reality, was that the totalitarianism of the Soviet system would steadily become more total, as it realized itself more fully. Later, as empirical evidence accumulated, awareness grew of the huge gap between the theoretical model and the reality of Soviet conditions: of the falling life expectancy, of hospitals without sewerage and running water, of rampant alcoholism, of pervasive corruption and cynicism. While all this led over time to a modification of the image of the Soviet system as successfully messianic and dynamic, it did little to lessen conservative belief in the regime's internal control and capacity to perpetuate itself. Zbigniew Brzezinski spoke for most convinced anti-Communists when he said that even if the system's innards were rotten, it still had hands of steel.

And then in a very brief period of time and without a serious struggle, the whole thing collapsed.

Let it be conceded that by the early 1980's—that is, before Gorbachev had come to power and launched perestroika, one or two people in the West—Richard Pipes of Harvard, for one, Ronald Reagan for another—had come to realize that the Soviet Union was in a state of serious crisis. Their published views establish that they had. But while such people were of crucial importance, they were also very, very few in number, and in any case their insight came late in the day. For most of the cold war, almost all conservative intellectuals, along with most others, bought the whole kit and caboodle of totalitarian claims, and claims made on totalitarianism's behalf, more or less at face value. Now that we know those claims to have been grotesquely false, the question arises: why were they so readily accepted?

PART of the answer is implicit in what has already been said about the loss of faith in liberal democracy and the market economy. G.K. Chesterton's aphorism that "those who have lost their faith in God do not believe in nothing, they believe in anything" has general application, and the dogmatism and confident ruthlessness of Communism were especially effective in convincing the confused and disillusioned that it was irresistible. (Having mentioned God, I should perhaps add that those conservatives with a strong personal religious faith—the leaders of the New Right, for example—were not appreciably more skeptical than other conservatives concerning the claims made on behalf of totalitarianism.)

The ground was also well prepared in other respects. One element conducive to making intellectuals receptive was the enormous prestige that science and technology had achieved by the early decades of the 20th century. Politically, this translated very readily into a belief in the possibility of a wholly rational, efficient society achieved by the application of scientific techniques of control—what the British philosopher Michael Oakeshott described as "the assimilation of politics to engineering . . . what may be called the myth of rationalist politics." Some very eminent scientists—for example, some of the leading young scientists at Cambridge University's famous Cavendish Laboratory in its interwar heyday, a group that was later to garner an impressive crop of Nobel Prizes—subscribed to and propagated this belief. There was a keen interest in those branches of science that dealt in, or could be utilized for, control—eugenics, behavioral psychology, cybernetics—and vast powers were attributed to them, as well as to activities like advertising and political propaganda that drew on their alleged insights and techniques. The strength of this kind of thinking was reflected in the literature of the period—in, to take three examples from the 1930's, H.G. Wells's *The Shape of Things to Come*, Rex Warner's *The Aerodrome*, and Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* (in which, as the *Oxford Companion to English Literature* briskly summarizes the plot, "Social stability is based on a scientific caste system. Human beings, graded from highest intellectuals to lowest manual workers, hatched from incubators and brought up in communal nurseries, learn by methodical conditioning to accept their social destiny"). The more all this was accepted, the weaker became the belief in an essential and indestructible human nature and the stronger the conviction that, given enough time and the application of scientific knowledge, everyone could be molded and manipulated into any desired shape. Against such a background, accepting the feasibility of "New Soviet Man" was not particularly difficult.

This background also helps explain the belief, quite widespread by the 1960's, that successful revolution against *any* reasonably functioning state, let alone a totalitarian one, was no longer feasible because of the increasingly sophisticated techniques and machinery of control available to governments. (The irony here, of course, is that some of the developments that were deemed to weigh the odds most decisively in favor of state power—particularly those in communication—were soon to contribute significantly to the undermining of that power. Even as Western intellectuals emphasized the propaganda, control, and mobilizing powers of modern communications,

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the insidiously subversive work of the transistor, the tape cassette, the copying machine, and the personal computer had begun.)

As science prepared the way, so did history—or at least ideological versions of it, as deterministic theories of historical inevitability gained ground in the early part of the century. To the extent that it was accepted that a preordained historical pattern was unfolding, whoever could most successfully claim to understand and represent that pattern enjoyed an immense political advantage. "Men could be fought," Isaiah Berlin observed, "but once 'History' herself took the field, resistance was vain." It was Marxism-Leninism which advanced the most intellectually elaborate and pretentious claim to represent history—and which was therefore deemed the most scientific. That, together with the fact that it had established a power base in the world's largest state seemed to many—including many non-Marxists—to validate its claim to represent the future.

To a very large extent, and until quite late in the day, the argument between intellectuals of the Left and of the Right was not so much about the validity of that claim—like the Victorian Liberal Sir William Harcourt, conservatives tended to concede that "We are all socialists now," in the sense that the steady march to collectivism seemed inevitable—but about whether it was something to celebrate and hasten or to fear and delay. The fact that conservatives went as far as they did in accepting the prevailing view of historical inevitability, and of the power of science and technology to mold human beings, indicates the limitation of their conservatism and the extent to which they, hardly less than their counterparts on the Left, were creatures of the Enlightenment.

As well as being a contest between the democratic West and the Communist East, the cold war was also a contest between Left and Right in the Western democracies. How does the decisive outcome of the first struggle bear on the verdict concerning the second? Who comes out of it better in terms of understanding what was at stake and supporting sound policies?

It is possible to maintain, of course, that no particular person or group deserves credit for the West's victory—that it was merely a case of an intrinsically superior system inevitably prevailing over an inferior one. Some now argue that, far from being enormously formidable as widely believed until recently, Communism was fatally flawed from the start and always carried within it the seeds of its own destruction. So it was really no contest. Joshua Muravchik of the American Enterprise Institute, for example, seems to be implying something along those lines in the opening pages of his recent book, *Exporting Democracy*, when he contrasts democracy as a "natural" state—"in the sense that it answers something innate in human nature"—with Communism which "began less with a theory of human nature than with a theory of history, one that has long ago shown itself to be erroneous. The system it spawned proved as unnatural as democracy is natural."

I do not find this line of argument convincing. While one system was and is infinitely superior to the other in human terms, I do not think that that in itself settled the outcome of the conflict. Certainly, virtually no one argued that it would while the struggle was still in progress and its outcome not known. States can be deeply flawed and yet, in the absence of external intervention, can survive indefinitely without collapsing in the way that the Soviet Union has just done. The Ottoman empire was "the sick man of Europe," and the condition of the Hapsburg empire was "desperate but not serious" for generations, but it took the Great War of 1914-18 to destroy them. There is always the need for some precipitating factor.

It is not in any case altogether clear that totalitarianism, flawed and evil as it is, carries within it the seed of its own destruction. Try the Nazi Germany test. Are we convinced that had it not been defeated in war—had it even won—Nazi totalitarianism would still, and of necessity, have collapsed from internal causes? Are the blatant failures of the Soviet system—the inability to do something as basic as harvest, store, and distribute food, for example—clearly intrinsic weaknesses of totalitarianism, the kind of thing sure to happen in any country saddled with such a system? If not, then arguments based on the allegedly inherent self-destructive character of totalitarianism cease to be available as an explanation, and the intervention of some other factor or agent is required. So the question remains: who or what contributed most to the collapse of Communism and its empire?

If history is likely to give any one group major credit it will be, I believe, the American policymakers of the mid- and late 1940's: that group of wise men—of whom Secretary of State Dean Acheson was the key figure—that was responsible for the Truman Doctrine, the Marshall Plan, NATO, and, not least, the Bretton Woods agreement which established the basis for an open, liberal international trading system. It was these men who set the conditions both for the containment and frustration of Communism, and for the longest sustained period of economic expansion in the history of the world. There was nothing inevitable about containment, and there was nothing inevitable about the economic recovery of Europe and Japan and the phenomenal development of world trade—they were all politically contrived. If they had not been, there would have been nothing inevitable about the collapse of Communism, either.

That having been said, the 1940's are pretty remote by now and when people discuss who can

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claim credit for victory in the cold war, they usually have more recent actors and events in mind. In those terms there are three competing candidates whose claims may be considered: conservatives, liberals, and Gorbachev.

Taking these in what I consider to be the order of ascending credibility, liberals really find great difficulty in mounting any sort of positive case for themselves. They have been out of office for the last ten years. In recent decades, too many of them are on record as disputing the reality or the point of the cold war, too many have argued for accommodation, too many have found it difficult to condemn the Soviet system—have even praised it and maintained it was not very different from ours—too many of them have done all these things for them now to be able to claim responsibility for the victory with any conviction.

Examples abound to support these assertions. There is, for instance, Professor Paul Samuelson's confident assurance, given in 1976, that it was "a vulgar mistake to think that most people in Eastern Europe are miserable." There is Professor Jerry Hough's once influential thesis that Brezhnev's regime was a modern pluralist one, not very unlike our own. And, as always, there is the loquacious and egregious Professor John Kenneth Galbraith, writing in that symbolic year, 1984, only a matter of months before Gorbachev assumed the leadership and declared a crisis:

> That the Soviet system has made great material progress in recent years . . . is evident both from the statistics and from the general urban scene. . . . One sees it in the appearance of solid well-being of the people on the streets. . . . Partly the Russian system succeeds because, in contrast with the Western industrial economies, it makes full use of its manpower.

(Failure does not deter Galbraith, or dent his confidence. On February 10 of this year he was issuing an authoritative warning to the readers of the Los Angeles *Times* concerning "a terrible tendency to exaggerate the role of technology in war, and especially in its extreme manifestation, which is air power.")

I do not think it unfair to say that latter-day liberals—say from 1968 on—typically gave higher priority to ending the cold war than to winning it. And the easiest and fastest way to end a war is to lose it. Liberals did not, of course, advocate outright capitulation. But they did accumulate a record of favoring concessions under pressure, of preferring to withdraw rather than withstand, of being prepared to mollify and condone, of characterizing firmness and unqualified opposition to Soviet totalitarianism as "provocative," "counterproductive," and indicative of an "inordinate fear" of Communism, of preferring an anti-anti-Communist posture to a simple anti-Communist one.

All this being so, on the whole liberals have preferred—understandably and sensibly from their point of view—to approach the question of who deserves credit by casting doubt on conservative claims rather than by advancing their own. They have tried to do so in two ways: by sponsoring and endorsing the idea that Gorbachev has done it all; and by subtly changing the question at issue.

So we come to the Gorbachev claim. Let me give two examples of the promotion of Gorbachev by liberals. Sidney Blumenthal of the *New Republic* begins *Pledging Allegiance*, his recent book on the 1988 presidential election, by quoting the Soviet spokesman Georgi Arbatov telling an American audience: "We are going to do something terrible to you. We are going to take away your enemy." The initiative, you see, was entirely with Gorbachev and his group—they were doing the "doing," while the West's role was the passive one of having something done to it, and that something was the removal of a treasured object of hate and fear. Far from having contributed to the end of the conflict, then, Western cold warriors wanted to perpetuate it and were dismayed to be deprived of it.

Three hundred and fifty pages later Blumenthal ends his book with the claim that Gorbachev's conception of a "common European home" is actually the Soviet response, unfortunately delayed 40 years by the cold war, to Roosevelt's grand design of liberal internationalism at the end of World War II—a brazen attempt on Blumenthal's part to link a new liberal icon to an old one.

Strobe Talbott, writing in the issue of *Time* magazine that declared Gorbachev "Man of the Decade," dismisses what he calls the "conceit" that Gorbachev is a consequence and vindication of Western policy, and says flatly: "Gorbachev is responding primarily to internal pressures, not external ones. The Soviet system has gone into meltdown because of inadequacies and defects at its core, not because of anything the outside world has done or not done or threatened to do." That is, Western policy was entirely irrelevant (at least it has become so by the second sentence, where the "primarily" of the first has been replaced with the uncompromising "not because of anything"). Talbott ends his six-page essay with a firm conclusion: ". . . whatever the next stage of history comes to be called, there is no question that Gorbachev has made it possible."

Let me make it clear that I do not belittle the importance of Gorbachev. His combination of realism, boldness, and incompetence has been very important in shaping the course of events. But unless one is prepared to treat his appearance as a total accident, there is a need to explain why the Soviet system threw up such an unusual leader at this particular time; or, conversely, why the leader it threw up became so unusual so quickly after assuming power. As far as I can see, the

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internal situation was not qualitatively much different in 1985 from what it had been in, say, 1982 or 1978. The crisis was chronic rather than acute, and the real "meltdown" did not take place until *after* Gorbachev, through an inept launching of perestroika combined with a large measure of genuine glasnost, had managed to convert a merely desperate situation into a fatal one.

The only obvious new, vital factor in the mid-1980's was the Reagan administration and the cumulative effects of its policies: the substantial and sustained American arms build-up; putting the Pershing missiles into Germany; the application of the Reagan doctrine (particularly in Afghanistan); the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI); the refusal throughout the whole first term to play the summit-détente game; the harsh, uncompromising denunciation of the Soviet system. All this must surely have had a daunting, traumatic impact on a regime that was already in deep trouble and had just made a tremendous effort to achieve strategic supremacy, on the assumption that the United States had lost its stomach for the fight.

So it seems to me that the Gorbachev explanation does not displace the Reagan or conservative explanation but is complementary to it. At least one well-placed Russian goes even further. Ilya Zaslavsky, a leader of the democratic bloc in the Soviet Congress of People's Deputies, maintains that the originator of perestroika was not Mikhail Gorbachev but Ronald Reagan.

The second way in which liberals have tried to deny credit to conservatives is by changing—or confusing—the subject. That is, instead of addressing the question, "Who advocated the sounder policies, implemented them most effectively, and thus had the greatest effect on Soviet behavior?," they attempt to replace it with "Who understood the cold war, and particularly the Soviet Union's part in it, best?" In doing so, they try to make understanding, rather than prescription and impact on events, the vital test.

The reason they do so is clear. The conservative record on policy is pretty well unassailable. Once they had been disillusioned concerning the feasibility of "rollback" and "liberation"—a process that was virtually complete after the Hungarian uprising of 1956—conservatives became the most consistent supporters of the other basic policy, that of deterrence. They regularly supported defense budgets sufficient to make these policies effective. They were never seduced by unilateral disarmament, "Ban the Bomb," or "Better Red Than Dead"; never equated concern about the Soviet threat with "paranoia" and "obsession," as many liberals did.

While liberals were entranced at various times by peaceful coexistence and détente, conservatives were suspicious and kept their eye on the Soviet arms build-up. And it was at a time when conservative-supported policies were being implemented most vigorously that Communism collapsed. So there is not much scope for the liberals to attack on the policy front.

When it comes to *understanding*, on the other hand, I think that conservatives are somewhat more vulnerable. Not as compared with the Left, which was consistently wrong about the Soviet Union. And not entirely so, for their understanding of the moral character of Soviet totalitarianism—that it was an unmitigated evil that had to be fought at all costs—was absolutely sound (though nothing drew more fire from the Left than this "moralism," routinely represented as "intolerant," "provocative," "fanatical," and "dangerous"). That apart, however, it has to be conceded that conservatives often exaggerated the extent and durability of Soviet power and the threat it represented—not grotesquely, as Talbott asserts, but significantly. They did so sometimes for political reasons—to counter complacency, to get bigger defense budgets, to further careers—but they also did so out of conviction. For, as we have already seen, they accepted—more or less uncritically—a theory of totalitarianism that attributed to it implacable power and a virtually immutable nature.

The columnist Michael Kinsley has seized on this and sought to use it to undermine the conservative case. Mockingly, and in the spirit of someone drawing attention to an obvious absurdity, he writes, "Conservatives, having said the collapse of Communism would not happen, now claim credit for it." But what is there to mock in that? Politics is not an academic exercise in which success or failure is measured by comprehension tests. It is a practical activity, and whether or not conservatives deserve political credit depends not on what they understood but on what they did—and, by and large, they did the right thing.

It might be said that conservatives won the cold war by virtue of character rather than intellect; won it despite having a flawed understanding of the enemy and of the strength of their own side; won it while having little confidence in the outcome until the very end; won it, one might say, by displaying the old-fashioned phlegmatic qualities of a peasant army—stubbornness, perseverance, endurance, and a simple uncomplicated sense of right and wrong. To stay the course while being deeply pessimistic about the outcome is, after all, a very conservative way of achieving victory.

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The Hunt for the True October

Martin Malia

THE October Revolution of 1917 was not simply an event in Russian history; it was also, if vicariously, an event in the history of every modern nation. For the Soviet Union was not just another country: it was the world's "first workers' state," and history's "first socialist society." The land of Lenin thus had universal import, since full socialism—not the puny Scandinavian variety, but the genuine revolutionary article—was, at least in aspiration, the *ne plus ultra* of democratic equality. And who in the modern world can be against equality?

No Western historian, therefore, can write about the Russian Revolution without commenting indirectly on the West, and none can keep his Western worldview out of an analysis of Russia. Ever since 1917, whenever the Soviet experiment seemed headed for success, the Western Right has been automatically deflated; and if it veered toward failure, the Western Left has been correspondingly diminished. And so the Russian Revolution became the great polarizing event in 20th-century politics.

For October gave a harsher, redder meaning to the Left and, with the emergence of fascism as militant anti-Bolshevism, it "dialectically" radicalized the Right as well, thus exacerbating the liberal-conservative divide existing in all Western societies since the French Revolution. In a first phase, the old liberal reflex of "no enemies to the Left" was transformed into the "anti-fascist" syndrome of the "popular front," thus giving spurious democratic respectability to Communism. But this called forth, in a second phase, conservative rejection of such abusive legitimation, a position that in turn was susceptible of inflation into denunciation of all liberals as covert Reds. So on the next turn, *this* accusation could prompt denunciation of all conservatives as incipient McCarthyites or proto-fascists . . . and so on, in a vicious spiral enduring for seventy years, and making the 20th century altogether nastier than the 19th. With such an emotional charge emanating from Red October, the historiography of the Russian Revolution can only be a uniquely passionate and partisan affair.

RICHARD PIPES, Baird Professor of Russian History at Harvard, is no stranger to this fray. Both an accomplished scholar in his field and a prominent participant in public debate and policy-making regarding the Soviet Union, he has throughout his career been forthright about his negative evaluation of the Russian Revolution, on the grounds that partisanship one way or the other is dictated by the nature of the event itself. He has now set forth in the 900 pages of his *The Russian Revolution** the results of forty years of study of his subject, to give us the most extensive general treatment since the two volumes of William Henry Chamberlin in 1935.

He could hardly have chosen a more opportune moment to produce such a work. The collapse of Communism that began in Eastern Europe in 1989, and is culminating now in the Soviet Union, will certainly force an agonizing reappraisal of our categories of interpretation of the Leninist phenomenon. The appearance of Pipes's important work, then, in conjunction with what is in effect the end of Soviet history, positively invites a stock-taking of some forty years of Sovietology, and a reassessment of its basic categories. But what are the established categories in the field? And what has the debate in Western Soviet studies been all about?

There are two major issues at stake. The first is the legitimacy of the founding act of the regime, "Great October" itself, as a proletarian and socialist revolution. The second is the question of continuity or discontinuity between Lenin's rule and that of Stalin. And both issues pose the further question of the Soviet regime's potential for democratic reform in the present—which is also the question of the viability of socialism as such, anywhere.

For if the Soviet regime originated in a genuine-

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* Knopf, 946 pp., $40.00.

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ly popular revolution, then Stalin is an "aberration" from the Leninist norm, and the system has the capacity, despite a temporary detour into horror, to return to a democratic and humane socialism. But if the system was born in a conspiratorial coup, then Stalin is Lenin writ large, and there is no democratic source to return to: Communism therefore cannot be reformed, but must be abolished. Recent Anglo-American historiography has almost uniformly adopted the first, "optimistic" perspective, and has consequently been organized around the questions: What went wrong? When did it go wrong? How can it be set right? But this historiography ignores the possibility that these might be false questions: that nothing *went* wrong with the Revolution, but that the whole enterprise, quite simply, *was* wrong from its inception.

Pipes is resolutely of the second opinion. But this is the view that prevailed four decades ago, when serious Soviet studies got started in this country, and the problem of understanding the Revolution appeared stark and simple: October was not a proletarian revolution, but a conspiratorial *coup d'état* carried out by a monolithic and disciplined Bolshevik party. This minority seizure of power was made possible only by the devastating impact of World War I on the rickety political and social structures of Imperial Russia. It was therefore not a product of the logic of Russia's historical processes, as Soviet Marxists would have it, but a brutal interruption of the country's promising development toward constitutional democracy. And Lenin's party dictatorship led necessarily to Stalinism, with its forced collectivization, crash industrialization, and institutionalized terror. The resulting system was "totalitarian," and thus morally one with Nazism and fascism, a view most forcefully articulated by Hannah Arendt.

Then, with Khrushchev's de-Stalinization beginning in 1956, the Soviet Union began to appear more prosaic, and the "totalitarian model" was displaced by modernization theory. This perspective, which Raymond Aron once described as "Marxism with the class struggle left out," held that the Soviet regime, behind its socialist rhetoric and the macabre trappings of Stalinism, was really a force for "development"—industrialization, urbanization, and mass education—like "authoritarian" regimes in other backward countries. Indeed, the Soviet case might be considered a model of "development economics" for the third world. And some specialists even held that Soviet Russia would one day "converge" with Western industrial societies, thereby at last realizing its democratic potential, and bringing to the new amalgam a socialist sensitivity to human needs lacking in the "capitalist" West. Or at least Russia might do this if the burden of the cold war were lifted, and its ideological justification, the "totalitarian model," with its slanderous equivalence of Communism with Nazism, were refuted.

So it was that modernization theory shaded off into a more ideological perspective after the late 60's, and the class struggle came creeping back in. It did so, however, on little cat feet, for this new social history was prosaically academic and positivistic in form, pretending that facts speak for themselves and largely eschewing overt value judgments. This new history, nevertheless, was thoroughly populistic in content, and so entailed a vehement assault on the statist totalitarian model. The resulting "revisionism" reversed its predecessor's emphasis on politics and ideology to give priority instead to social and economic factors; it replaced "regime studies" with "social studies," and purported to explain Soviet developments "from below," as a product of society, rather than "from above," as an imposition of the state.

Over the past twenty-five years Soviet history has been systematically rewritten from this perspective, especially on the level of the metahistorical Big Questions. Thus October became an authentic proletarian revolution, generated by class "polarization" between workers and capitalists—the thesis of Leopold Haimson and William Rosenberg, among innumerable others. The party in 1917 was presented as undisciplined, diverse, and therefore "democratic"—the position, notably, of Alexander Rabinowitch and Ronald Suny. Lenin's recourse to terror and all-out nationalization during the War Communism of 1918-21 were passed over as temporary expedients imposed by civil war, thereby leaving as his true legacy the "mixed" economy of the New Economic Policy, or NEP, of the 1920's, and Nikolai Bukharin as his sole legitimate heir—the view, preeminently, of Moshe Lewin and Stephen Cohen. Leninism therefore was not totalitarian, and Stalin was excluded from the authentic canon of Bolshevik history.

This, at least, is the main current of revisionism, and its cardinal point is the absolute separation of Lenin and October from Stalin. But there is a bolder school of revisionism which suggests that Stalinism, properly understood and pruned of some excesses, is the real fulfillment of Leninism. For in this view Stalin's first Five-Year Plan, too, had democratic roots, in a "cultural revolution" by workers against holdover "bourgeois specialists," a movement culminating in massive "upward social mobility" from the factory floor. The meaning of the Revolution, consequently, may be summarized as "terror," "progress," and "social mobility," with only a modest cost in purge victims in the "low hundreds of thousands." The resulting Soviet order, finally, was characterized by the interplay of "interest groups" in a pattern of "institutional pluralism." This second revisionist school—represented most prominently by Sheila Fitzpatrick and Jerry Hough—thus rejoins the totalitarian model's emphasis on continuity

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between Lenin and Stalin, but with a positive evaluation of their consubstantiality. But all strains of revisionism concurred in one thing: that with Gorbachev and perestroika the Soviet experiment would at last return to the True October, all aberrations overcome and all wrong things set aright.

It is around this set of theological issues that revisionist scholarship has largely turned during the past two-and-a-half decades. In the introduction to each new monograph the totalitarian model was ritually excoriated, and the "T-word" was banished from polite academic discourse. Its use was viewed as virtual incitement to cold-war hostility toward the "Evil Empire." A pall of political correctness* settled over the field.

Or at least this was so on the level of theoretical implications and the Big Questions. On the level of the lesser, empirical questions that stemmed from them, however, the record of revisionism is often richer and more nuanced, for the refocusing of Soviet studies on society was not just ideological; it was also part of a general movement of the historical profession to social history, often of a sophisticated sort, drawing not only on E.P. Thompson-style Marxism, but also on the *Annales* school or on anthropology, and the outcome was to give us a much fuller picture of Russian events than had been available 25 years earlier, or than is available even today to the Soviet public. It is for this reason that Soviet publishers are now translating key works of Anglo-American Sovietology, the revisionists predominantly—but also the present volume of Pipes himself.

PIPES is now reentering the Sovietological debate by reviving and elaborating a totalitarian model he was one of the few not to forswear during the revisionist era. But he has a very particular understanding of totalitarianism. His "model" (a term he probably would not use) is indeed political rather than social, but it is not ideological, as in the classic totalitarian approach. Rather, for him the key to Sovietism lies in the Russian national tradition and a virtually changeless Russian political culture compounded of despotism above and servitude below, a tradition in which the country and its inhabitants are the property of the ruler, and sovereignty is confused with ownership.

Such characteristics have classically been called, in a usage going back through Hegel to Montesquieu, "Oriental despotism," a concept that Marx recast in economic terms as the "Asiatic mode of production." Pipes gives it the label of "patrimonialism," a category he takes from Max Weber's historical sociology of "traditional domination," presumably to set primitive Russia off sharply from the more advanced "old regimes" of the West which originated in feudal contractual relations. In this perspective, the Bolshevik regime, by nationalizing everything in the country, basically continued the patrimonial pattern that had prevailed during most of the old monarchy's history.

This theory is the guiding thread of all Pipes's work. The present volume is, in fact, part of a trilogy developing the theme over Russia's thousand-year existence. The first volume, *Russia Under the Old Regime*, which appeared in 1974, takes the demonstration up to the end of the last century. The essence of that volume is given in the opening chapters of the present work, which then takes the narrative down to the outbreak of the Civil War in mid-1918. And we are promised a third volume, *Russia Under the New Regime*, which will develop the analysis through the war to Lenin's death in 1924. But it is already apparent that this date will return Russia to its patrimonial point of departure and that Stalinism will turn out to be contained in the handiwork of Lenin.

So much for the general model. But, as with all models, what counts is how it is elaborated empirically, and Pipes argues as follows. His Russian Revolution is a long-term process, extending from the Great Reforms of Alexander II in the 1860's, which first liberalized the "patrimonial" order, to the death of Stalin in 1953, when a "counterrevolution" within the Soviet elite began to undermine the neo-patrimonial regime of Communism. But the revolution more narrowly conceived, as the crisis of transition from the old regime to the new, extends from the outbreak of radical student agitation in 1899, through the upheaval of 1905, down to the consolidation of Bolshevik power under Lenin. And this 25-year crisis is Pipes's immediate subject.

This crisis, for Pipes, arises out of the destructive interaction among the autocracy, the peasantry, and the radical intelligentsia. Beginning in the 1860's, the state, in order to remain competitive within Europe, modernized the economy and, inevitably, society and culture, thus subverting the traditional "patrimonial" structure in every domain but politics. The result was increasing pressure from the intelligentsia, the chief force for modernity, to crown the task of Europeanization with a democratic constitution.

But there were two fatal obstacles to this endeavor. First, the peasants, with "centuries of serfdom in their bones," and lacking both private property and the sense of law, provided a woefully inadequate base. Second, the intelligentsia themselves—constitutionalist Kadets, Marxist Social Democrats (SD's), and peasant-oriented Socialist Revolutionaries (SR's)—unprepared for the politics of compromise by the autocracy's exclusion of society from public affairs, radicalized their

* This term, incidentally, is not a recent neoconservative invention designed to smear progressives, as the latter sometimes now assert. It is an old Stalinist designation long used on the American Left, although by the 1980's with a certain uneasiness, and in a strictly in-group manner. [See p. 44 of Dinesh D'Souza's article in this issue—ED.]

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tactics to the point of revolutionary terrorism. The autocracy, therefore, transformed itself into an all-pervasive "police state," in which already "lay the seed of modern totalitarianism" (a muting of Pipes's earlier claim that the emergency laws of 1881 furnished the "real constitution under which . . . Russia has been ruled ever since"). Under these circumstances, intelligentsia maximalism inevitably infected the peasantry and a new working class hardly distinguishable from it.

The first outcome of this process was the demi-Revolution of 1905, which, though it led to an elective legislative Duma and the modernizing agrarian reforms of Pyotr Stolypin, did not create a genuine constitutional order or a stable society. The inadequacies of this settlement prepared the way for the still greater crisis that erupted in 1917 under the strains of World War I. In the resulting collapse, a ruthless band of ideologues exploited the gullibility of the liberals and the immaturity of the masses to seize power in the "October coup" of 1917. In so doing, the Bolsheviks' motivation, especially that of Lenin himself, was a boundless thirst for power and a consuming hatred of all "bourgeois" enemies. So in the Civil War which followed, the Bolsheviks proceeded to the "conquest of Russia," a process in which they resorted to an amplified, terroristic version of the police governance of the old regime in order to found the new regime of Communism.

The blame for this catastrophe is to be imputed in equal parts to the intransigence of the state, the brutishness of the masses, and the fanaticism of the intelligentsia. And for Pipes, it is very much a question of imputing blame, because "the Russian Revolution was made neither by the forces of nature nor by anonymous masses but by identifiable men pursuing their own advantages" and hence "properly subject to value judgment." Pipes's judgment is a Burkean indictment of the Revolution for the criminal folly of undertaking the instant transformation of society in accordance with abstract principles.

The focus of the book, then, lies in a dense political narrative and the analysis of the different actors' motives. Accordingly, Pipes points up the "irresponsibility" of the liberal Kadets, both in 1905 and in 1917, in attacking the autocracy without a clear plan for replacing it, and in adopting a myopic stance of "no enemies to the Left" toward the revolutionary parties. He drives home the important fact that in February 1917, it was not the "people" who inherited power from the monarchy, but the intelligentsia, who made up the leadership of all the political parties, liberal as well as socialist. Throughout he deservedly deflates Aleksandr Kerensky, the head of the provisional government in 1917 who was deposed by the Bolsheviks in October. He is particularly effective in presenting the minoritarian and military, if thoroughly unheroic, nature of the "October coup," as well as the cynical police dispersal of the Constituent Assembly in January 1918, a subject never before treated so fully in English. A significant novelty is the plausible argument that there existed no organized right-wing plot by General Lavr Kornilov in August 1917, contrary to common opinion—although here Pipes unduly plays down Kornilov's desire to suppress the soviets at some point, a very real "counterrevolutionary" intention that eventually did emerge in the White movement. Another major argument which Pipes also overstates is that the impetus to radicalization of the masses in the soviets came from the socialist intelligentsia, not from the workers and soldiers themselves: interaction between leaders and led is certainly nearer the truth.

But what comes through, overall, in Pipes's narrative is the valid point that the essence of Bolshevism lay not in its putative class character, but in the "militarization of politics," and that the alleged proletarian revolution was in fact a confiscation of all power in Russia by the self-appointed Leninist vanguard. The result is a resounding revindication of the primacy of politics in the Revolution and a rejection of social-history reductionism. This case is made all the more effective by a vigorous, determined style: a succession of sharp, declarative sentences, largely unencumbered by subordinate clauses, advances the argument by accumulating factual detail without ever, in 900 pages, causing the reader's attention to flag.

It is highly doubtful, however, that this work will be generally received as the "comprehensive view" of the Revolution that the author intended it to be; for two major components of the revolutionary process are seriously underplayed. The first is the condition of society. Indeed, it is a strange fact that, although Pipes is clearly arguing against the social interpretation of the Revolution—the words "masses," "proletariat," "toilers," "bourgeoisie," etc. are almost always in quotation marks, as if designating the vocabulary of a mythology—the social-history scholarship referred to above is almost never mentioned. The revisionists, of whose current hegemony Pipes can only be quite painfully aware, are simply ignored, whether in the text or in the copious notes, in favor of such ancient, if estimable, authorities as S.P. Melgunov on the October overturn. But, in so doing, Pipes has clearly bent the stick too far in the other direction, to the detriment of the credibility of his own cause.

For, though October was indeed a *coup d'état*, such a coup was possible only in the midst of a genuine social revolution, which the Bolsheviks could exploit or use, but which they could not unleash, or even easily direct. Though the workers were not the Bolshevik party's enduring "social base," they were its temporary yet indispensable

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springboard to power. Nor were these workers, though mostly of recent peasant origin, just a subcategory of the peasantry, whose political behavior can be equated simply with the immemorial Russian "*bunt*," or anarchic rural uprising. The urban industrial experience made a genuine difference in their behavior by giving them an enhanced capacity for organization, as well as opening them to the ideology of socialism, a concept quite foreign to the peasantry. Similarly, the Petrograd garrison in February 1917 was not merely reenacting a peasant *bunt* but consciously engaging in a mutiny against modern state power. Nor were the peasants themselves the changeless and semisavage mass that Pipes portrays, but a society in evolution, and capable of calculated action in *pursuit of their interests.*

The primacy of politics, therefore, if it is to be argued with genuine effectiveness, must be integrated into what was indisputably a social revolution. Here the revisionists, for all their reductionist failings, have produced much that has to be taken into account. Pipes would only have strengthened his case by recognizing and incorporating the valid part of this material.

The second factor that Pipes underplays is ideology. He begins by stating, accurately, that the Bolsheviks' aim was "no less than 'overturning the world.' By this was meant a complete redesign of state, society, economy, and culture all over the world for the ultimate purpose of creating a new human being." In short, they intended to "build socialism." But he then gives an oddly idiosyncratic definition of socialism: its core concept is not the abolition of private property, as Marx and most others invariably had it; it is rather the rational ordering and control of society, of which the "rationalization of the economy" is only a subtext. Since, moreover, "a life ruled by 'reason' is a life ruled by intellectuals," for Pipes the rationality of socialism comes to mean all power to the intellectuals. The intellectuals therefore foisted their worldview on reality by creating a "special language" extolling the "popular masses" as those in whose name their power would be exercised.

The origin of these ideas, for Pipes, is in the thought of the 18th-century *philosophe,* Helvétius, who held that "morality and legislation were 'one and the same science,'" whereby the human species might be made "virtuous" through "manipulation of man's social and political environment." Helvétius's ideas then got into Marxism through Engels (Hegel is simply ignored) and into reformist liberalism through Jeremy Bentham, thereby making liberals chronically vulnerable to the blandishments of revolutionary socialism.

It is most doubtful that historians of ideas will find this a convincing genealogy of modern radicalism; but much more important is that, with such a pallid and self-serving concept of socialism, the Bolsheviks could hardly have taken over Russia and set out to "overturn the world." They needed—and had—the far more potent weapon of Marxism, structured around the grandiose dialectical historicism of Hegel, not the paltry mechanistic environmentalism of Helvétius, and this ideology gave them the conviction that they were riding the logic of history to inexorable victory, and that the class struggle was the motor force of all human progress. They needed also to believe that the exploited "masses," by the very fact of their humiliation and dehumanization in class society, were more authentically human than their selfish "bourgeois" exploiters, and thus the "universal class" alone capable of generating the revolutionary might necessary to end all class *exploitation and dehumanization in the future.*

In sum, the Bolsheviks needed an ideology that reproduced in modern, and vengeful, form the age-old religious logic that in the final days the last shall be first, and the lowly shall be exalted. And they needed, finally, to believe that all this was scientific—as Newton and Darwin were scientific—and that their party alone possessed this demiurgic science. Only with such convictions—which were in truth fanatical—could Lenin and the Bolsheviks have resorted to coercion and terror on the scale necessary to the fantastic enterprise of "building socialism." As Solzhenitsyn put it, "The imagination . . . of Shakespeare's villains stopped short at ten or so cadavers. Because they had no *ideology*. . . . It is thanks to ideology that . . . the 20th century experienced villainy on a scale of millions."

To elucidate such a process Feodor Dostoevsky is really a better guide than Edmund Burke. But better still is Leszek Kolakowski, whose *Main Currents of Marxism* is probably the only work of genius to have been produced in, or around, the Soviet field. Pipes does footnote him, but could have profitably exploited him far more extensively. For, as Pipes's book stands, it contains no serious discussion of Marxism in what was, after all, the world's first Marxist revolution.

But underestimating the role of ideology in the Revolution naturally leads to overestimating the Russian tradition in determining its outcome. It is obviously no accident that the first Marxist revolution occurred in Russia; and no sensible historian would deny that the Russian heritage significantly molded Soviet socialism. At a minimum, most scholars would agree that the fragility of Russia's prerevolutionary civil society made the country exceptionally vulnerable to the impact of modern war, and therefore to takeover by a determined minority, as well as to forcible remolding from above. (It is an extreme position to hold, as does Solzhenitsyn, that Marxism and Russia are totally incompatible entities.) The real question, rather, is the proportions in which this heritage and European social-

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ism were combined; and Pipes rides his claims of immutable Russianness to implausible lengths.

He does this, not by identifying documentable agents of transmission between the old and the new regimes, but by simple assertion on the basis of *post hoc ergo propter hoc*, or the fallacious principle of "after this, therefore on account of it." For example, Lenin's rule by ukase, or decree, evokes the following gloss: "The system of government which the Bolsheviks set in place within two weeks of the October coup marked a reversion to the autocratic regime that had ruled Russia before 1905: they simply wiped out the twelve intervening years of constitutionalism"—as if the circumstances and motivations prompting these ukases, as well as their socialist contents, were not marked by the difference between conservatism and revolution, divine right and Marxist "proletarian" dictatorship.

Fortunately, however, Pipes is not consistent in this matter, for he also argues that after October the Bolsheviks laid "the foundations of a type of regime unknown to history, a one-party dictatorship." And in developing this position he gives us perhaps the best and most original section of the book, on the creation, in 1918, of the "one-party" or "dual state," where a private and unaccountable political association controlled the nominal public authority. And, indeed, the thoroughly unpatrimonial institution of the party-state was one of the two major innovations of the Bolsheviks.

Their other major innovation was the equally unpatrimonial command economy. Though recognizing that Lenin's policies of War Communism between 1918 and 1921 were inspired in part by Imperial Germany's "War Socialism" and Louis Blanc's (not Marx's!) socialism, Pipes expatiates:

> In spirit, however, War Communism resembled most the patrimonial regime (*tiagloe gosudarstvo*) of medieval Russia, under which the monarchy treated the entire country with its inhabitants and resources as its private domain. For the mass of Russians, who had never really been touched by Western culture, state control of the economy was more natural than abstract property rights and the whole complex of phenomena labeled "capitalism."

Yet it should be obvious that state control of the economy was not a medieval practice anywhere; nor was it desired by the peasant "mass of Russians," who soon forced the regime to reintroduce the market in the form of the NEP. It should be equally obvious that War Communism, insofar as it was not due to the pressure of circumstances, was inspired by inveterate socialist hostility to private property and the market. And this ideological approach to economics, finally, together with the ideologically-based "dictatorship of the proletariat," furnished the structural ribbing of Soviet totalitarianism overall.

The chief areas where Pipes can demonstrate some measure of institutional continuity—or more accurately imitation—as between old regime and new is government by bureaucracy and the political use of the police. But even here, as his own account shows, there was a quantum leap after 1917. For example, under the old regime,

> essentially the countryside was self-administering through the institution of the peasant commune which was held collectively responsible for the payment of taxes. . . . The authority of the Imperial Government, for all practical purposes, stopped at the eighty-nine provincial capitals where the governors and their staff had offices: below that level yawned an administrative vacuum.

Conversely, "by 1920, Soviet Russia had become a police state in the sense that the security police . . . spread its tentacles to all Soviet institutions, including those that managed the economy. . . . The Cheka had transformed itself from an organ responsible for investigating . . . political dissent into a super-government which . . . supervised the day-to-day activities of the entire state apparatus," struggling against "class enemies," as well as "'speculation'—that is, private trade." To be sure, under Lenin the state failed to vanquish the village, though not for want of trying, and it remained for Stalin to complete the job with his kolkhozes; but this delay in full implementation does not change the fundamental difference between the old regime and the new.

The book concludes with two long chapters, one on the murder of the Imperial family and the other on the Cheka, which make out Red Terror and the police state to be the essence of Soviet totalitarianism. It is this inflated assessment of police power that explains Pipes's bizarre thesis, mentioned above, that the seeds of totalitarianism were present already in 1881. For the murder of the Imperial family, however deplorable, was unimportant politically, and it is difficult to see in it, as Pipes claims, the symbolic inauguration of a "new moral realm" in history carrying "mankind for the first time across the threshold of deliberate genocide." The omnipresence of the police is a much more significant matter; even so, one cannot make it the core of Soviet totalitarianism.

Communist totalitarianism, as evaluated by those who until recently have lived under it, is nothing so simple as the use of brute physical force by the police. It consists, rather, in the amalgamation of all human activity into a single politicized whole, and the atomization of society by the omnicompetent state. The economy, culture, private life, and language itself, are all ideologized and mobilized permanently for the "building of socialism." Institutionally, this means: the party, the plan, and the police, coordinated

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through an interlocking directorate of party cells and ubiquitous *agitprop*. The police have an "honorable" place in this system, to be sure, but if they were its essence it is difficult to see how Communism could have been the worldwide magnetic force it clearly was for so many decades. For that, Soviet totalitarianism needed to appear in the transcendent guise of "real socialism"; and such an aura could be plausibly provided only by a universalistic ideology.

ALTOGETHER, then, in this important volume, and at a crucial juncture in Soviet history, Pipes has given us a single-minded, powerful, and yet one-sided book. So how might his resuscitation of the totalitarian model affect the ongoing Sovietological debate?

With the epoch-making victory of anti-Communist forces in the Russian Republic elections of June 1991, and especially with the popular explosion ignited by the abortive coup of August, the Soviet citizenry has registered its conclusion that the enterprise inaugurated by October 1917 has ended in bankruptcy; so we must adjudge Pipes to be right and the revisionists to be wrong on the Big Questions of the legitimacy of October and of the Lenin/Stalin nexus. And we might further expect that his book should prompt inquiry as to why the Western field was dominated for so long by what were, in fact, false questions.

Yet it is unlikely that his contribution will be sufficient to accomplish this result. His stance is too embattled, and his tone of indictment too militant—indeed, somewhat too old-regime—to make it possible for the opposition to surrender gracefully. So the old debate will go on for a while longer—though not much longer, since the issues it addresses have fallen victim to historical events.

The questions of October's legitimacy and of the authenticity of Stalin's Leninism presupposed that the Soviet enterprise was in some measure a success, that it might possess moral value, and that the system thus had a future which was both "human" and non-capitalist. Yet six years of Gorbachev and glasnost produced not Communism's reform and renewal, but its disintegration and demise: perestroika ended unequivocally in "katastroika," in Aleksandr Zinoviev's phrase, and the almost certain liquidation of party, plan, police, and pseudo-Union.

Such an event is unparalleled in Western history. Never before has so huge and superpuissant an empire collapsed in peacetime, without the shock of military defeat, and purely from internal causes. We need only make the comparison with the collapse of the German, Italian, and Japanese regimes produced by World War II—or indeed with the end of the old regimes of Russia, Germany, and Austria in World War I—to see how exceptional is the present Soviet case. Moreover, the totality of Soviet structures—political, ideological, economic—collapsed simultaneously, in an implosion so complete as to leave behind no viable institutions for whatever government will inherit the rubble.

But the cruelest blow is perhaps that never before has a long-established power been the target of such obloquy from its former subjects. For the population has now explicitly repudiated in principle the main fruits of October (though it has hardly liquidated their consequences in practice). The three pillars of the system—the party, the plan, the police—stand condemned, together with all the symbols and icons of the regime, right back to Lenin himself. The watchwords of the democratic majority today are "seventy years on the road to nowhere" and "the Communist party is a criminal organization."

No other revolution in history has ended in such ignominy. We need only make the comparison with the recent triumphal bicentennials of the American and French Revolutions and the more decorous British tricentennial commemoration of the "Glorious Revolution" of 1688 to see, once again, the degree of Soviet exceptionalism. Soviet socialism will not even celebrate its 75th October, still less reach the first centennial mark.

So Soviet history is at last over, with a clear beginning, a middle, and an end. And now that we know this end, we will automatically perceive the beginning and the middle differently. Indeed, it is no exaggeration to say that real understanding of Soviet history has for the first time become possible. It is only now that the shades of night are falling over Sovietism, that Hegel's "owl of Minerva" can at last take flight for Muscovy.

In this crepuscular illumination the issue of October's democratic legitimacy has automatically become moot: the Bolshevik coup clearly appears to be just that—which is why the scene of the coup has reclaimed its pre-Revolutionary name. Similarly, to most Soviets the issue of the Lenin-Stalin filiation is now immaterial, and only party dinosaurs still insist on an essential distinction between the two. Thus, Leninism has become the last refuge of the scoundrel, and Stalin has come to appear worse than his model only in degree, not in kind. So at the end of the hunt for the True October we find only the rusted-out launching bay for a septuagenarian imposture.

Perhaps the greatest error of revisionism has been to obscure the possibility of such an outcome. Social history is a rich means for illuminating the concreteness and complexity of the past, but there is one thing that it cannot do, and that is to explain the origin and dynamics of political systems. As the more sober social scientists would have it, politics is an "independent variable"—and culture is too. In attempting to derive the Communist regime from class relationships, a narrow-gauged social history has overreached itself and denatured its subject.

For revisionism's exclusive preoccupation with

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the "social base" of Bolshevism, with the toiling masses, and with the material processes of industrialization and urbanization, has given us a banal and trite society, a "modernizing" Soviet Union that could, in fact, be "just another country." In sum, it has given us a 20th-century Russia without Communism, a Soviet "Hamlet" without the prince—and also without the tragedy.

But events have now shown that this modern Soviet Union is only a make-believe Soviet Union. And what distinguishes the real Leninist regime from all other societies is the sovereign presence of the Red prince, in the shape of the party-driven quest for an impossible socialism. The time has thus come to retire our social-science models for a good rest, and to put Communism back into Soviet history. And here Pipes's book can provide a useful impetus.

But we must also go beyond a purely political understanding of Communism to an ideological and, indeed, psychopathological one. For the world of "utopia in power" (as Mikhail Heller and Aleksandr Nekrich have called it) is necessarily an absurd and surreal world; and therein lies the key to its tragedy as well. It is because of this absurdity that when Soviets speak of their hopes for the future, they do not mention first "democracy" or "the market," but say simply that they want to live in a "normal society."

To grasp this crucial aspect of the Communist experience, a renewed Sovietology could do no better than to draw on the great Russian literary tradition of the grotesque and the fantastic. Taking its inspiration from Gogol, this mode of perception has been applied, with unsurpassed insight, to the Soviet experiment by such figures as Andrei Platonov, Mikhail Bulgakov, Abram Tertz, and Aleksandr Zinoviev. And their genius could flourish precisely because never until the birth of Communism had the Western world been offered a spectacle of such surpassing surreality.

So how might a new debate take shape in Soviet studies, or more exactly in post-Soviet Russian studies? The necessary starting point for a valid post-Sovietology can only be the unprecedented catastrophe to which the legacy of Great October has led. Just as important must be awareness of the failure of our old "models" to grasp the dynamic preparing that outcome, and our grim overestimation of the Soviet Union's prowess, whether as an ideal or as an adversary. For when history at last reached the city of Oz, behind the magic curtain there was only a bogus wizard, frantically concealing his impotence in flames, smoke, and noise.

The sources of this paradox constitute no doubt the basic problem that post-Sovietology will have to address. And the next pair of Big Questions might well be these: How could such a fantastic enterprise as Bolshevism, and in backward, broken-down Russia, take itself for so long to be the world-historical alternative to "capitalism"? And how did the Bolsheviks get away for so long, in full view of the outside world, with what had been from the start a world-historical fraud?

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Rape in Feminist Eyes

Norman Podhoretz

1.

If prostitution is the world's oldest profession, rape may well be the second oldest crime. But this ancient crime received, so to speak, a new lease on life about thirty-five years ago, when (as we learn from a scholarly paper written jointly by the "sexuality educator" Laurie Bechhofer and Professor Andrea Parrot of Cornell[1]) a sociologist at Purdue named Eugene Kanin "documented the existence of sexual aggression within courtship relationships. Of the women he sampled 30 percent had been victims of rape or attempted rape while on a date."

To be sure, Bechhofer and Parrot do not believe that this was a brand-new phenomenon. As they see it, "Forced sex between acquaintances has probably occurred as long as people have been involved in relationships with each other." This would seem to take us all the way to Adam and Eve, but Bechhofer and Parrot more modestly trace it only as far back as the rape of Tamar by her half-brother Amnon, the story of which in the biblical book of Samuel shows that its "dynamics . . . have not changed significantly over the past 2,000 years"[2]:

> Amnon forced Tamar to have sex despite her wishes. He got her into his bed through manipulation and then rejected her after the rape. Tamar was emotionally distraught by the rape, yet others simply trivialized her feelings.

"Despite its long history," however, it was not until Professor Kanin's pioneering research that this particular form of rape was "reported in the scholarly literature." Even then, according to the chronology supplied by Bechhofer and Parrot, another twenty-five years passed before it acquired a name. In September 1982, Karen Barett, a journalist, wrote an article for the feminist magazine *Ms.* in which (apparently ignorant of the book of Samuel) she drew attention to a "new and unusual" form of sexual aggression and called it "date rape."[3] The problem was that this name narrowed the field to couples actually going out together, and so a broader designation was needed to cover the many instances in which the aggressor was previously known to his victim but had not taken her to dinner or whatever. Out of this necessity the term "acquaintance rape" was born.

The "experts," as they are always described in newspaper stories on the subject, persist in referring to acquaintance or date rape as a "hidden crime." Well, hidden it may have been for several thousand years, but hidden it is no longer. In an amazingly short time, a vast literature has sprung up, much of it emanating from the women's-studies departments now enshrined on almost every campus in the country, but more and more of it also appearing in popular magazines and daily newspapers. Inevitably Oprah and Geraldo have also chimed in, and by now there can hardly be anyone left in America who has not been alerted to the existence of a problem which, though supposedly coterminous with the human race itself, and though now said by the feminist journalist Robin Warshaw to be "more common than left-handedness or heart attacks, or alcoholism,"[4] was not even recognized as a problem until practically the day before yesterday.

It is reasonable to ask why such recognition should have been delayed until our own time. After all, rape is not only among the oldest of recorded crimes; as Susan Brownmiller, the Founding Mother of the antirape movement, documents in detail in *Against Our Will: Men, Women, and Rape*,[5] it has also and always inspired horror and been punished with the greatest ferocity.

For example, in the 10th century, during the reign of the Saxon king Athelstan, a rapist not only incurred "the loss of his life and members," as well as his property; it was even decreed that his horse be "put to shame upon its scrotum and

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[1] "What is Acquaintance Rape?," in *Acquaintance Rape: The Hidden Crime*, edited by Andrea Parrot and Laurie Bechhofer, Wiley (1991), 401 pp., $39.95.

[2] Actually it is about 3,000 years, but let that pass.

[3] Actually the term "date rape" had already appeared in Susan Brownmiller's *Against Our Will: Men, Women, and Rape*, which was published in 1975, but let that pass, too.

[4] Warshaw's book, based on a survey done in 1985 for *Ms.* by Professor Mary P. Koss, now of the University of Arizona, is entitled *I Never Called It Rape: The* Ms. *Report on Recognizing, Fighting, and Surviving Date and Acquaintance Rape*, Harper & Row (paperback, 1988), 229 pp., $8.95.

[5] A paperback edition came out in 1976 (Bantam, 541 pp., $6.95).

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tail." In the 13th century, the sentence was reduced to castration and blinding, under the following rationale:

> Let him lose his eyes which gave him sight of the virgin's beauty for which he coveted her. And let him lose as well the testicles which excited his hot lust.

Brownmiller is careful to emphasize that such gruesome punishments were restricted to rapists of virgins. Yet she acknowledges that commentators also spoke at the time of "severe" punishment for rapists of "matrons, nuns, widows, concubines, and even prostitutes." Furthermore, she herself hails as a great advance a late-13th-century English statute decreeing the death penalty for the rapist of "a married woman, dame or damsel." And she notes that the maximum penalty for rape is still life imprisonment.[6]

It is essential to Brownmiller's polemical purposes, and commanded by her quasi-Marxist ideology, that she attribute the seriousness with which rape has always been taken to the basest economic motive (males protecting their property). Nevertheless, the fact remains that the world did not need to wait upon the publication of her book or the birth of the modern feminist movement before learning to regard rape as a heinous crime. Nor, as the story of Tamar does indeed reveal, was the world oblivious to the possibility that rape could occur between acquaintances. Yet neither the Bible nor any other source found it necessary to distinguish between what today's "experts" designate as "stranger rape" on the one hand and "date rape" or "acquaintance rape" on the other. The rape of Tamar by Amnon is no different in the eyes of the Bible from the rape of Dinah by Shechem, since in both instances the key element of physical force is present. And far from "trivializing" the episode, as Bechhofer and Parrot puzzlingly allege, the father of Tamar and Amnon, King David, is "very wroth," and her other brother Absalom is so distraught that he avenges her by contriving to have Amnon killed.

But if everyone has always understood that it was rape when a man used a weapon and/or physical violence or the threat of it to force a woman into sex, whether she had met him previously or not—and let me state here for the record that I myself consider life imprisonment none too harsh a penalty for any such man—why introduce the new category of date or acquaintance rape? The answer is that this is a way of applying the word "rape" to a multitude of situations in which, as Bechhofer and Parrot (and all other "experts") freely admit, "Assailants are more likely to use verbal or psychological coercion to overpower their victims than guns or knives."

Now, if we pause for a moment and remind ourselves that overcoming a woman's resistance by "verbal and psychological" means has in the past been universally known as seduction, it will immediately become clear that we are in the presence here of nothing less than a brazen campaign to redefine seduction as a form of rape, and more slyly to identify practically all men as rapists. "Acquaintance-rape educator" Py Bateman, who once edited the *Journal of Sexual Assault and Coercion*, more or less lets the cat out of the bag when she declares:

> Rape is not some form of psychopathology that afflicts a very small number of men. In fact, rape is not that different from what we see as socially acceptable or socially laudable male behavior.

(Incidentally, the "we" who see rape as "socially laudable" are especially prevalent, it seems, in America: ". . . every man who grows up in America and learns American English learns all too much to think like a rapist. . . ."[7])

It is no wonder that the "experts," armed with the new category of "non-violent sexual coercion,"[8] are able to estimate that at least one out of four, and as many as one out of three, young American women are victims of rape or attempted rape by a date or acquaintance.[9] The only wonder is that they come up with so low an estimate. Why not 100 percent?

And indeed there are feminists who do not shrink even from that. Brownmiller is sometimes seen as one of these, but she is not quite of their company. True, she walks up to the edge in the most famous sentence of her book—"[Rape] is nothing more or less than a conscious process of intimidation by which *all men* keep *all women* in a state of fear" (the italics are definitely her own). But she also denies believing that heterosexual coupling is itself a species of rape. And she even gives her endorsement (albeit, one might say, against her will) to this form of intercourse:

> Anatomically one might want to improve on the design of nature, but such speculation ap-

[6] As an interesting measure of how seriously rape is taken by men today, just this past summer two men who were in a Connecticut jail on a charge of having raped a 19-year-old woman and videotaped the proceedings, were beaten up by other inmates. This is the kind of thing that used to happen in prison only to child molesters. (To complicate matters, the woman later denied that she had been raped.)

[7] This lulu (quoted by Warshaw) comes from a man, Timothy Beneke, author of *Men on Rape*, St. Martin's Press (1982), 174 pp., $5.95.

[8] This phrase is the title of a paper by Professor Charlene L. Muehlenhard of the University of Kansas and one of her students, Jennifer L. Schrag, which is included in *Acquaintance Rape: The Hidden Crime*.

[9] Professor Neil Gilbert of Berkeley—using the FBI's definitions of rape and attempted rape, and basing himself on the FBI and Bureau of Justice Statistics data—shows in an excellent piece in the Spring 1991 issue of the *Public Interest* that the actual figure for rape and attempted rape of young women by dates and acquaintances is a tiny fraction of the figures thrown around by the "experts," and has moreover been declining since 1980.

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pears to my mind as unrealistic. The human sex act accomplishes its historic [*sic*!] purpose of generation of the species and it also affords some intimacy and pleasure. I have no basic quarrel with the procedure.

The radical feminist critic Andrea Dworkin, on the other hand, *does,* to put it mildly, have a basic quarrel with the procedure. In her book *Intercourse* (1987),[10] she denounces the "simple-minded prosex chauvinism of Right and Left," and in effect extends Brownmiller's definition of rape to the sex act itself:

> Without being what the society recognizes as rape, [intercourse] is what the society—when pushed to admit it—recognizes as dominance.

One of Dworkin's favorite metaphors for sex is "wartime invasion and occupation," and she describes it as

> evil up against the skin—at the point of entry, just touching the slit; then it breaks in and at the same time it surrounds everything. . . .

In this nightmare inversion of D.H. Lawrence, even the element of coercion is irrelevant; the woman's consent only makes her a "collaborator" with her "rapist":

> Physically, the woman in intercourse is a space inhabited, a literal territory occupied literally: occupied even if there has been no resistance, no force; even if the occupied person said yes please, yes hurry, yes more.

But Dworkin, believe it or not, goes even further:

> . . . occupied women [are] more base in their collaboration than other collaborators have ever been: experiencing pleasure in their own inferiority, calling intercourse freedom. It is a tragedy beyond the power of language to convey when what has been imposed on women by force becomes a standard of freedom for women: and all the women say it is so.

2.

At one point, Dworkin (in one of her gentler characterizations) describes intercourse as "the pure, sterile, formal expression of men's contempt for women." But however great men's contempt for women may be, it could hardly match the contempt for women exemplified in the above quotations and pervading the literature which has been spawned by the antirape subdivision of the contemporary feminist movement.

To read this stuff—not just outspoken radicals like Dworkin herself but mainstream academics like Andrea Parrot, who teaches not only at Cornell but also at SUNY,[11] and liberal journalists like Robin Warshaw—is to be presented with a picture of women as timorous, cowering, helpless creatures who are at the mercy of any male they may be unfortunate enough to run into. Those young women who still feel no fear upon meeting the boy next door are portrayed as naive and are sternly (but compassionately) lectured on their need to recognize that this clean-cut fellow, or any other "regular guy," is far more likely to rape them than (in Warshaw's words) the stereotypical "stranger (usually a black, Hispanic, or other minority) jumping out of the bushes . . . brandishing a weapon. . . ."

The women we meet here often blithely accompany their dates or acquaintances into empty houses or apartments, proceed to engage in "certain behavior, like kissing or heavy petting," and are then shocked—shocked!—to discover "men assuming that [this] behavior . . . is an automatic precursor to intercourse."[12]

So widespread among the male sex is this outlandish "behavioral assumption" that a girl cannot even sleep in the same bed with a man without being pressured to go all the way. Here—direct from the pages of Robin Warshaw's *I Never Called It Rape*—is Carol, age 18, who attends a fraternity party with "some nice boy from the next suburb," where she does a little drinking. The next thing she knows,

> We went back to the guys' apartment and my friend Terri went too. It never occurred to me that anything was going to be going on. We were just going to be sleeping there.

But as Warshaw, in reporting on this case, comments ominously,

> just sleeping together is not what Carol's date had in mind. After they got into bed, he started kissing her, then escalated his sexual attention. Despite her repeated "No, no, no" and her physically pushing him away, he used the advantage of his six-foot-three body to overpower her five-foot frame.

Carol, incorrigibly innocent to the end, did not realize she had been raped. But thanks to the antirape movement, she realizes it now.

Thanks to the movement too, she also realizes that she bears no responsibility whatever for what happened to her. For from earliest childhood, writes Warshaw, Carol, like all girls, had been "taught directly and indirectly (by parents, teachers, playmates, and pop-culture role models) to be passive, weak, and opinionless." Even after she became a young adult, she was "expected to be fearful and inhibited" and was not "encouraged to develop independence and self-reliance." (This, in 1988!) Now, having had her consciousness

[10] A paperback edition was published in 1988 by the Free Press, 257 pp., $10.95.

[11] In addition to editing the weighty academic tome *Acquaintance Rape: The Hidden Crime*, she is the author of a popular handbook aimed mainly at teenagers, *Coping with Date Rape & Acquaintance Rape*, Rosen (1988), 134 pp., $12.95.

[12] New York *Times*, January 2, 1991.

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raised by what is perhaps the most important precept of the movement, she understands that in no way and under no circumstances does any blame attach to the victim of a rape. According to an exquisitely delicate formulation of this precept, "It's his penis, and only he is responsible for where he puts it."

Admittedly, Carol might have been more careful, and from now on, some other, more fortunate, Carol, tutored by such books as Andrea Parrot's *Coping with Date Rape & Acquaintance Rape*, will adopt certain "strategies" the "experts" have developed to lessen the risk of being raped. She will try to "feel good" about herself, perhaps by getting professional counseling. She will lay off alcohol and drugs. She will even avoid "being isolated with a man." If by some unhappy chance, however, she should find herself alone with one of these brutes, she will send him a "clear message" both in words and in "body language." For instance, she might announce, "I don't go to bed on the first date," or "I want to wait until marriage." Also, she will not make the mistake of letting him unbutton her blouse while telling him that she just wants to be friends. If (or rather when) he refuses to get the message and forges ahead anyway, she will yell something like, "I don't want to have sex with you; if you force me, it is rape." In the, alas, almost inevitable event that even this fails to scare him off, she will (having already taken a self-defense course and done a lot of practicing) go after "the vulnerable target areas on [his] body (such as eyes, knees, ribs, neck, nose, instep)" with her most "effective weapons (such as fists, feet, elbows, head)."

3.

"Sexual intercourse began/ In nineteen sixty-three/ (Which was rather late for me)—/ Between the end of the *Chatterley* ban/ And the Beatles' first LP." For any man old enough to know at first hand what those famous lines by Philip Larkin mean (and, I suspect, even for many younger men who grew up under the auspices of the sexual revolution of the 60's), reading the literature on acquaintance and date rape is bound to be a bewildering experience.

There is, for one thing, that endless parade of helpless and stupid females who pass through this literature. Where, the male reader is likely to wonder, have such females been hiding all his life, and what has become of all the others—those swaggeringly self-assured women flaunting their sexual allure—he sees everywhere he goes? If these women are terrified of men, they give off not the slightest whiff of it. On the contrary, what they communicate, in their dress, in their bearing, in their carriage, is a serene confidence in the great power they have over men. And as almost any male reader can confirm, it is a confidence to which they are richly entitled. "Where do they all come from? What do they want from me?" cries a middle-aged character in a Paul Mazursky movie as he sits ogling *this* parade from the table of an outdoor café in Los Angeles.

But if middle-aged men still feel this way, it is at least not as bad for them as it is for the adolescent male. An adolescent male is typically a creature in a state of perpetual sexual anguish. The sight of just about any girl at any time in any place can plunge him into a fever of lust, and what makes his plight even more maddening is the unfairness of it all. *He* may be in a state of endless turmoil over sex, but girls, the same girls who do this to him just by being there, seem able to take or leave sex at will. Though their very existence is a provocation even when they are not (or are they?) deliberately taunting and teasing him, neither he nor any other boy seems to have a comparable power over them. For them it is evidently as easy to say no to sex as it is impossible for him. From which he learns very early on that his only hope of ever breaking through this incomprehensible indifference is by not taking their no for an answer at any stage in the process of courtship—which, as he also learns very early on, is precisely what some (and probably most) of them want him to do.

Realities like these are not entirely absent from the literature on acquaintance rape, but they are presented in terms that are again bound to bewilder any normal male reader. According to Robin Warshaw, expressing the movement's party line on this matter, the whole thing is a "myth," a "dogma of what . . it means to be male" into which boys are "indoctrinated" by "fathers, uncles, grandfathers, coaches, youth group leaders, friends, fraternity brothers, even pop stars." This, it appears, and not their bitter experience with girls, is why they come to "view their relationships with women as adversarial challenges," and why they end up believing

> that they must initiate sexual activity, that they may meet with reluctance from girls, but if they just persist, cajole, and refuse to let up, that ultimately they will get what they want.

So far as the feminist movement is concerned, any man who acts on this "myth" is on the road to becoming a rapist, if indeed he is not already there. For in the movement's eyes a woman's no always means no, her maybe always means no, and even—I do not exaggerate—her yes often means no: "Many feminists," writes Susan Estrich, late of the Dukakis campaign and now a professor at the Harvard Law School,[13] "would argue that so long as women are powerless relative to men, viewing 'yes' as a sign of true consent

[13] *Real Rape: How the Legal System Victimizes Women Who Say No*, Harvard University Press (1987), 160 pp., $15.95. (Quoted by Gilbert.)

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is misguided." Or, as Muehlenhard and Schrag explain it in "Non-Violent Sexual Coercion":

> There could be many reasons why a woman might not resist a man's advances so that unwanted intercourse could occur without force. The woman may fear that resisting will make the man violent. She may be confused. Her socialization may make it difficult for her to resist.

Not only, then, is there never any justification for pressing ahead when the woman protests or resists, even mildly; if the "experts" get their way, any male who has intercourse with any female, including his wife or a girlfriend with whom he has been sleeping all along, without first practically getting a signed and notarized consent form to cover that particular episode, will wind up in jail.

4.

WHAT on earth is going on here? Why should the feminist movement be promulgating a conception of rape that comes so close to turning seduction, and even heterosexual intercourse in itself, into a criminal act?

One possible explanation is that the influence of lesbian and other man-hating elements within the movement has grown so powerful as to have swept all before it. No doubt lesbians are only a small minority among feminists, but like other radicals in other political movements they tend to be more passionate, more energetic, and more ideologically coherent than the moderates, whose waverings and ambiguous feelings make them easy to manipulate. Once the moderates have been subjected to "consciousness raising," they begin to find more and more truth in the radical deconstruction or demystification.

Where sex is the issue, this takes the form of putting what is natural to male sexuality in the worst possible light. The ever restless masculine sex drive (so strange and frightening to so many young, and even not so young, women, ruled as they are by much more quiescent erotic impulses) gets to be seen as sheer aggression; its normally indiscriminate and promiscuous character (again very different from the much more focused erotic impulses natural to the female) becomes a deliberate insult to women; and the masculine need to conquer—a need obverse to and symbiotic with the natural motion of female sexuality from resistance to acquiescence—is interpreted as an expression of contempt for them.

To make things even easier for the lesbians and other man-haters, there was the sexual revolution of the 1960's, which wound up giving women in general new reason to fear and resent men.

For men the sexual revolution meant that the war between the sexes had suddenly ended, and it had ended, moreover, on their terms. (Larkin: "Then all at once the quarrel sank:/ Everyone felt the same. . . .") Now, *mirabile dictu*, sex could be had exactly as men had always dreamed: promiscuously and with no conditions attached. Of course the reality turned out to be rather different from the dream, and once the novelty of meeting little or no resistance had worn off, the kick began to go out of the entire experience. (One hopes that Larkin, who lived just long enough to see this happen, derived some consolation from it.)

But for women it was worse, much worse. To the degree that they embraced the sexual revolution as a new dawn of equality which (in what Larkin mordantly described as "A brilliant breaking of the bank,/ A quite unlosable game") would make them as free as men had always been to jump happily into bed with anyone and everyone, they unilaterally disarmed themselves in the war between the sexes. No matter how ideologically committed they may have been to their new sexual freedom, and no matter how enthusiastic they may have thought they were about the abolition of the old double standard, it was soon borne in upon them that the game was not quite so unlosable as they had imagined, and that *they* were the losers. For the truth was that they did not feel the "same" as men, and there was no satisfaction to be had in striving to imitate the masculine sexual drive.

Nor, for all their emancipation from the puritanism of the past, did women who did this, or tried to do it, quite escape feeling cheap and even—though the word would never have been permitted to enter their minds—immoral. They also felt cheated and exploited and abused; and the fact that they themselves were the main authors of this predicament did not prevent them from blaming it on men.

ABOUT twenty years ago, Midge Decter[14] interpreted the rise of the women's liberation movement in the late 60's as (among other things) a covert revulsion against the sexual revolution. Wanting to say no again but having signed on to an ideology that deprived them of any reason or right to say it, women were desperately looking for a way back that would not seem regressive or reactionary, and they hit upon it in a counterrevolution which posed as a new and higher stage of revolutionary development.

This new stage arose out of the announcement that the sexual revolution had been no revolution at all but rather another in the long history of male conspiracies to degrade and dominate women. From here it was but a short and easy step to the conclusion that sex itself—heterosexual sex, that is—was the mother (or rather the father) of all these conspiracies. For some women the so-

[14] In *The New Chastity and Other Arguments Against Women's Liberation*, Coward, McCann & Geoghegan (1972), 188 pp., $5.95.

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lution was to shun men altogether in favor either of abstinence (the "new chastity") or lesbianism. But this being too radical for most women, the movement adopted what appeared to be a more moderate objective: to work toward a wholesale change in the relation between the sexes.

As a delicious historical irony would have it, a prophet of the new sexual order envisaged by the movement was discovered in the formerly despised Victorian age in the person of one Victoria Woodhull, "the first publisher of the *Communist Manifesto* in the United States and the first woman stockbroker on Wall Street," as Andrea Dworkin, her leading disciple, informs us. It was not, however, in these capacities that Woodhull commended herself to contemporary feminist attention. It was, rather, in her role as, in Dworkin's words, "the greatest advocate of the female-first model of intercourse" (also known as the "female-supremacist model"). Woodhull insisted, Dworkin continues,

> that women had a *natural* right—a right that inhered in the nature of intercourse itself—to be entirely self-determining, the controlling and dominating partner, the one whose desire determined the event, the one who both initiates and is the final authority on what the sex is and will be.

Thus, having been bruised and disillusioned by their effort to end the war of the sexes through unconditional (if inadvertent and unconscious) surrender to the masculine principle, women would now move in the opposite direction and demand (this time in full consciousness) that the war be ended through unconditional surrender to the feminine way. Women would now have (again Dworkin, paraphrasing Woodhull)

> real and absolute control in each and every act of intercourse, which would be, each and every time, chosen by the woman.

It is here that we run smack into the main purpose of the campaign against date and acquaintance rape. To further the establishment of the new sexual dispensation, it becomes necessary to delegitimize any instance of heterosexual coupling that starts with male initiative and involves even the slightest degree of female resistance at any stage along the way. Hence almost the entire range of normal heterosexual intercourse must be stigmatized as criminal, and both women and men must be educated to recognize it as such. But to make sure that normal people are not put off by so weird a project, the new conception has to be framed in language that does not betray the antinomian radicalism behind it.

Here, then, is how Robin Warshaw translates the lunatic prescriptions of an antinomian radical like Dworkin into relatively bland "guidelines for change" that men are exhorted to follow if they are to avoid becoming rapists. Among these 11 guidelines are the following:

> 1. *Never force a woman to have sex*—even if she has "led" you on, even if she has slept with your friends, even if she at first said "yes" and then changed her mind before having sex, even if she had sex with you before. This includes *all* unwanted sexual contact—from kissing to "copping a feel." . . . When partners' desires conflict, the one who wants more activity has to yield to the one who wants less. . . .
>
> 2. *Don't pressure a woman to have sex.* Men often see their verbal pressuring as being less forceful than women do. Even when the words you use are not threatening, the woman may feel that she is in danger. . . .
>
> 6. *Do not confuse "scoring" with having a successful social encounter.* . . . You can have intercourse with 100 women and still not know anything about good sex or what it means to be a "real" man. Ejaculating is no big deal; having a mutually agreed-upon and sustained relationship is. . . .
>
> 8. *"No" means "no."* . . . When a woman says "no" that means "no." Stop. . . . Do not try to cajole her or argue with her. . . . If you think she's saying "no" to protect her "reputation" (even though you know she *really* wants to have sex with you), so what? When (and if) she's ready to have sex with you, let it be her choice to make. If a woman says "no" and really means "yes, but you have to convince me," then you don't want to be with her anyway. . . . Just walk away.

Fat chance.

5.

WHICH is to say (because "You can't fool Mother Nature") that the date-rape campaign has a very hard row to hoe. As the "experts" themselves are only too aware, what they with their usual elegance call "rape-supportive" attitudes remain almost as stubbornly in place as ever. In fact, they estimate that a whopping 84 percent of the men who are guilty of raping a date or acquaintance according to the new definition (that is, men who do not physically harm their "victims" but only ignore their protests and press on) refuse to regard themselves as rapists. As Warshaw informs us, some of the same "hyper-masculine" or macho "male zealots" even

> become oddly tender immediately afterward and try to dress the women or cover them. Some gallantly insist on walking or driving their victims home, telling the women that it's dangerous for them to be out alone. Others profess love and talk about having an ongoing relationship. Another type kisses their victims good-bye and says they will call them again soon.

This is exactly what the "experts" would expect of the male sex after thousands of years of "socialization" by a "rape-supportive" culture. To their horror, however, women too are still resisting the new concept of rape.

Thus, in a paper for *Acquaintance Rape: The*

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Hidden Crime, two professors at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Jacqueline W. White and her collaborator (in both senses of the word), John A. Humphrey, are appalled to report that adolescent girls (including Los Angeles teenagers, "a group that might be expected to hold egalitarian sex-role values") are still reluctant to attach the label rape to "nonconsensual sex" on a date unless a significant amount of force was used. Furthermore, a majority (56 percent) of girls (as compared with 76 percent of boys) believe that a boy has a right to ignore a girl's protests under certain circumstances—when, for instance, she has gotten him sexually excited.

As for adult women, they are even more retrograde than the teenagers, to the point where "women jurors are often especially harsh" in cases of alleged acquaintance rape. To Pauline B. Bart, co-author (with Patricia H. O'Brien) of *Stopping Rape: Successful Survival Strategies*,[15] this has nothing to do with understanding born of experience. It is all a matter of "denial":

> To live with the knowledge that not only are all women vulnerable to rape, but that frequently they are raped by men they know is difficult. If, however, women believe . . . that only bad women can be raped and only crazy men who are strangers are rapists, then they can feel safe.

The same mechanism of denial is hauled in to account for the fact that the vast majority (73 percent) of women who in feminist eyes have been "victims" of "rape" by a date or an acquaintance persist in refusing to call it rape on the ground that, while they offered resistance of one kind or another, they were neither threatened by nor subjected to real physical force. Robin Warshaw, as usual providing a convenient summary of the movement's party line, is equally quick to dismiss as "typically self-blaming female explanations" such statements by these "victims" as "I must have misunderstood him," "I didn't make myself clear," or "I'm wrong for feeling bad about this." But neither the "rapists" nor their "victims" agree with the "experts." The much-cited survey done for *Ms.* by Mary P. Koss even showed that somewhere in the neighborhood of half of the women who were considered victims of rape by the "experts" were willing to have sex again with the dates or acquaintances who had "assaulted" them.

Of course, these surveys were conducted before the date-rape campaign really got rolling, with all its attendant publicity and with all the workshops and seminars and other "acquaintance-rape awareness" educational programs now being set up in high schools and colleges (they are especially necessary, says Warshaw, "during the most dangerous period—from the first day of classes to Thanksgiving break"). It is therefore safe to predict that future studies will yield results more heavily influenced by the new conception of rape. A larger percentage of men, and an even greater percentage of women, subjected to all this brainwashing, will no doubt apply the term rape to situations in which minimal or no physical force was used, or in which the only "coercion" consisted (as Neil Gilbert succinctly describes it) of the

> conventional script of nagging and pleading—"Everyone does it," "If you really loved me, you'd do it," "We did it last night," "You will like it." . . .

Yet if this will represent a triumph for the feminist movement, and most of all for its man-hating and lesbian sectors, it will only be another case of ashes in the mouth for the women to whom that movement, speaking in their name and presuming to act in their interest, has already done so much damage.

To the extent that men are bullied or persuaded into following, or at least trying to follow, the "guidelines" of the new sexual dispensation, the number of "wimps" about whom women have been complaining ever since women's lib was born (though without ever seeing any connection between the two phenomena) will multiply apace. So—to the great joy of Andrea Dworkin and those "experts" like Muehlenhard and Schrag who believe that "discrimination against lesbians continues as a form of indirect sexual coercion," and constitutes "one more source of pressure for women to be in sexual relationships with men"—will the incidence of male impotence. The search for husbands, already so difficult that hordes of young women have taken to advertising in the personals columns, will in consequence grow even more desperate, and the already familiar female refrain, "Why are all the men I meet either wimps or married or gay?" will swell into an even mightier chorus. And yet, nature still being stronger after all than its antinomian enemies, most young men and most young women will not be repelled or frightened off and will play their naturally ordained parts in the unending and inescapable war between the sexes, suffering the usual wounds, exulting in the usual victories, and even eventually arriving at that armistice known as marriage.

Even these lucky ones, however, will have a harder time of it because of the lethal new poison which has been sprayed by the anti-date-rape brigades onto the battlefield of the war between the sexes in general and the struggles of courtship in particular. As for the unlucky ones, those young men and young women who will be too impressionable or too frightened or too weak to hold out against the imperatives of the new sexual dispensation, they will have its feminist authors to thank for a life of loneliness, frustration, resentment, and sterility.

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[15] Pergamon Press (1985), 216 pp., $27.50. (Quoted by Warshaw.)

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Counting the Jews

Edward Norden

HOW MANY Jews are there on the planet today, and how many will there be in another generation? Where are they, and where will they, their children, or their children's children, probably be in the year 2021 C.E.? What difference does it make?

The quest for answers to these questions is for the adventurous only. The first step is to pose a counter-question, namely, Who is a Jew? That is as hard as any of the others. Two centuries after the French Revolution, a century and a decade after Jews started coming to the U.S. in their huddled masses, 74 years after the Bolshevik Revolution, and 43 years after the Jewish state rose from the dead, defining a Jew takes nerve.

Traditionalist rabbis have a ready solution. But if their test is applied—that is, if a Jew is anyone born to a Jewish mother, or converted according to Jewish law (*halakhah*), or born to a woman thus converted—then numbering the Jews has become nearly impossible. Too many have had too many children with too many non-Jews for too long to reckon the population this way on anything but a case-by-case basis, and demographers, unlike rabbis, have neither the time nor the resources to check pedigrees.

Does that mean the demographer's job is hopeless? Not quite—there is more than one way to play the prophet, and more than one way to define a Jew for purposes of counting. Jean-Paul Sartre wrote in 1946 that a Jew is someone whom other people identify as a Jew; presumably he had never met a Jew who would have identified himself as one no matter how others identified him. Yet Sergio DellaPergola, a demographer at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, implicitly goes by something like Sartre's definition, at least when figuring how many of his fellow Israelis are Jews.

Every Israeli is issued an ID. On the "nationality" line of this booklet he or she must have a religion inscribed by an Interior Ministry clerk. Theoretically, the clerk and the powers he represents are free to decide how that entry is to read. Practically, both his leeway and the registrant's are limited by history, ideology, and convenience. Subtracting the Israelis registered as Muslims, Christians, Druse, Baha'i, and Buddhists, you get the figure cited by DellaPergola of four million Jews today in the Jewish state.

Actually, as we shall see, it is a bit more complicated than that—but simple compared with doing a census of the Jews in the Diaspora, scattered, mobile, and mutating as they are. The only feasible and accurate enough method of doing that is to ignore Sartre and find out how many people in a well-constructed sample choose to identify *themselves* as Jews of one kind or another, take their word for it, and extrapolate.

Asked his religion, Woody Allen says "Jewish—with an explanation." DellaPergola offers three categories which provide an explanation beforehand. They bow to the fact that in the wide world, in what can be called without prejudice the Diaspora, Jewishness, once a condition or fate or vocation, has become an option, and nowhere more spectacularly than in the United States. One result has been to fill the field where demographers work with a swarm of freshly-minted categories. Some of these make it possible to understand better what is happening, while others put a spin on history, hoping maybe to influence its course.

The first of DellaPergola's categories is the so-called core. This is the population of people who when asked say they are Jews, no matter whether they obey many, some, or none of the commandments laid on the Israelites in the desert, and regardless of what any rabbis might say about their mothers or conversions. Next, and greater than the core, is what DellaPergola calls the "extended" population—that is, the core plus those people with a Jewish parent or two who do not choose to identify themselves as Jews. And bigger still is the "enlarged" population, consisting of the core, the extended, and the Gentiles whom people in the first two categories may be living with in the same household. For the sake of simplicity, practicality, and perhaps also ideology, DellaPergola targets the core in his latest world round-up.*

Today, DellaPergola estimates, there are 8.8 million core Jews in the Diaspora. This number he arrives at by adding up the subtotals from all the countries where governments or Jewish organ-

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EDWARD NORDEN's recent articles in COMMENTARY include "The Ingathering" (April), and "Behind 'Who Is a Jew'" (April 1989). The present article will form part of a book he is writing on the future of the Jews. Its publication has been sponsored by the Harry Elson COMMENTARY Fund.

* "World Jewish Population, 1989," written with Uriel Schmelz, in the *American Jewish Year Book 1991*.

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izations or travelers report that there are Jews. And there still seem to be some nearly everywhere, including in some of the oddest places. Five are reported residing in the People's Republic of China, 4,000 in Syria, 4,000 in Poland, and 12,000 in Spain, from where those who were not burned alive or converted under duress to Christianity were chased five centuries ago next year. Even Saudi Arabia, until recently *judenrein*, is the mail-drop for a few dozen Jewish soldiers, both men and women, who helped save the kingdom from the modern Nebuchadnezzar and some of whom have not yet been shipped home. There are core Jews once again in Germany—40,000 of them. France is in fourth place internationally with 530,000.

The reports from the Diaspora vary in credibility. Those from countries like the U.S. are "relatively reliable," according to DellaPergola; for the U.S. core, his statistics happen to be drawn from last year's National Jewish Population Survey (NJPS), an expensive and for the time being definitive study which he helped to design. But the figures from many other countries, like Venezuela and Hungary, are "conjectural." He marks the French and German figures with a "C" for no better than fair accuracy. Pretty good figures are available on Australia and Canada. These two are the only countries in the Diaspora whose Jewish populations have grown of late, in both cases thanks to immigration from the USSR, South Africa, and Israel. In fact, Canada has taken over fifth place from the United Kingdom, whose Jews are fast assimilating, imploding between the pincers of an anemic birthrate and a lively rate of intermarriage.

Before adding the numbers up, the Israeli demographer adjusted the various subtotals by trying to apply the same definition of a core Jew to all the statistics, whether the original census-takers or other sources did so or not. His numbers for the non-American Diaspora thus constitute shrewd, meticulous estimates, not the last word. He may be off when he adds the Diaspora's core Jews to the Israeli Jews and gets 12.8 million, but he is probably not wildly off, since countries like Venezuela and Hungary, Canada and Australia, France and the UK, and indeed all the branches of the Diaspora except the U.S. and Soviet Union are nothing more than fascinating, sometimes very sad, sometimes not-so-sad, sideshows. If 85 percent of the world's Jews definitely are located in the U.S., Israel, and the USSR, 75 percent of the Jews of the Diaspora are located in the U.S. and USSR.

True, there could be more Jews in the USSR than some people think. The 12.8 million figure might be too low by a million, which DellaPergola says is possibly the number of core Jews about to come out of the Soviet woodwork. Even if that happens, however, and the true figure is 13.8 million, it would still mean that coming on to half a century after Auschwitz, the Jews have failed to make good their losses. Sticking with 12.8 million, we have one core Jew for every 406 of today's roughly five billion global villagers, or a quarter of 1 percent of humanity. This is certainly the smallest proportion of Jews to non-Jews since demography became a science. Possibly it is the smallest since Abraham's great-grandchildren went down to Egypt.

Whether 12.8 million or 13.8 million, the Jews today represent a remnant. This is probably nothing new—they may well have been a fraction of their earlier numbers at a couple of stages in their 4,000-year history so far, only to bounce back. What may be novel is that now the core of this remnant, according to DellaPergola and others, is shrinking. Distant early signs of this shrinkage were picked up long ago, at the beginning of the 20th century, by demographers and sociologists, most of whom came to Zionist conclusions and never dreamed that anyone, least of all the Germans, would try to exterminate the core and non-core Jews alike. The shrinkage is expected by DellaPergola to quicken soon. His reasons look convincing when to his round-up we add the data on intermarriage, birthrates, and age structure of the Jews in Israel and the Diaspora—in short, when we set the demographic statistics in time and space.

Israel

DEMOGRAPHERS measure birthrates, what they call a group's "completed fertility," by counting how many children are born to the average woman in that group in her lifetime. The so-called "replacement level" (RL) of fertility, below which any group will start dwindling within a generation, is also expressed in terms of children-per-woman: RL is 2.1 for groups projecting a normal age structure or "population pyramid," that is, with more young people than middle-aged, and more middle-aged than old. The best data available indicate that the average Diaspora woman has 1.4 children, far below RL, while the average Israeli has 2.7.

The average in Israel is derived from the output of some highly dissimilar subgroups, Israeli Jews forming several societies within their very own melting pot. The 2.7 average is more than the number of children borne by secularized women of European (Ashkenazi) extraction, and less than the number racked up by Afro-Asian (Sephardi), Orthodox, and ultra-Orthodox women—the figures for the last three subgroups are roughly 3, 4, and 6 respectively.

It is really no wonder that the overall Israeli birthrate beats the Diaspora's, since until the recent Soviet immigration, the Sephardim, Orthodox, and ultra-Orthodox combined to make a clear majority, a state of affairs obtaining nowhere in the Diaspora. The men and women who take biblical injunctions to heart and/or those still under the sway of Muslim culture pulled up the fertility slack of those who, having freed them-

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selves from the yoke of the Law, think and act more like modern Europeans or Americans. "They can barely get one out," you hear Sephardim quip about their secular Ashkenazi compatriots.

Yet even the bareheaded Ashkenazim are no slouches compared with their Diaspora counterparts. Women whose parents or grandparents made their debuts in Warsaw or Kiev, most of whom finish university and work at careers, on the average bring 2.3 children into the world. The Superwoman type in Israel, the woman doctor or professional feminist or judge or Knesset member, instead of being childless or the mother of a solitary designer child like her American sister, is more likely to have two children, sometimes three. From the chic blond suburbs of Tel Aviv to dark-skinned, flyblown "development" towns, from the kibbutz to the cloistered alleys of Jerusalem's ultra-Orthodox quarter, Mea Shearim, in benighted thrall or perfectly autonomous consciousness, Israeli women act more or less as if the future of their sliver of a country and tiny, far-flung people depended on it.

But only more or less. For it is also a fact that the Israeli birthrate has been steadily slipping over the last 40-odd years. And that makes for a geopolitical problem, since the Palestinian Arabs reproduce at a rate two or three times that of the average Israeli Jew. The so-called demographic timebomb is ticking not just in the West Bank and Gaza, but within Israel proper, where there are plenty of Arabs who are Israeli citizens. True, most Israeli Arab women no longer bring eight and ten children into the world, and the Palestinian women of the West Bank too have been liberated and modernized to a degree by the occupation. But the Arab birthrate between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River still runs twice as high as that of Jews. The bomb can be visualized graphically by superimposing the Israeli Jewish population pyramid over the Palestinian. If the base of the former, in a word its future, is solid compared with the Diaspora's, it is nothing compared with that of the Palestinians, more than half of whom are aged 15 and younger.

Ishmael may yet get his revenge, right inside his half-brother's enlarged tent, although thanks to the Soviet immigration it may take him a little longer than was earlier thought. DellaPergola has fed the new parameters into his computer and estimates that due to the huge differential at the base of the pyramids, every 100,000 incoming Soviets are going to delay Jewish-Arab parity between the sea and the river by one year. If half a million come, the bomb will go off in 2020; if a million, in 2025; and if a million-and-a-half, 2030. This is assuming that all the Soviet newcomers remain, Judea, Samaria, and Gaza are kept, the Palestinians also remain and do not emigrate, and the fertility gap between the two peoples does not close.

These assumptions and projections have been publicized in the Hebrew press. But the popular idea in Israel is still that the Soviet immigration has either solved the Jewish-Palestinian demographic problem or put so much longer a fuse on it that in the list of things to lose sleep over, it can be relegated near the bottom. Something will turn up—masses of Palestinians may flee, masses of American Jews may come, the horse may die, the king may die. Meanwhile, Israeli policy is to keep ferrying in the Soviets.

They come, around 500 of them every night, under the provisions of the Law of Return, and that is a demographic story in itself. There are few laws in the world as humane, or as constructive, as the Law of Return. According to it, anyone born of a Jewish mother or converted to Judaism—by any brand of rabbi—qualifies for entry into Israel and citizenship. Anti-Semites in their hatred and Palestinians in their frustration consider this to be racism in action, and some good liberals in the West, impressed by the UN's "Zionism-is-a-form-of-racism" resolution, also cannot help wondering. And yet it is not so. No one can change his race, whatever race is, while anyone can become a Jew, therefore the Law of Return is not racist. It is admittedly an unusual law, but then the Jews have long been an unusual people.

One of the most unusual and admirable features of this law is that admission to the Israeli club is not restricted to the children of Jewish mothers and to converts. Anybody married to a Jew, or who is a child or grandchild of one, also has the same right to enter and get citizenship. The terms of the Law of Return, under which the Soviet and Ethiopian Jews are only the most recent to be flown in free of charge, are more than generous, embracing as they do three generations. They include and go beyond DellaPergola's enlarged population and outdo even the articles of the Nuremberg laws, downwind of which the Israeli framers of the Law of Return worked in 1950. (According to the Nazis, the "Aryan" spouses and parents of Jews could save their skins by divorcing their Jewish wives and husbands and repudiating their children, known in German as *Mischlinge*. Some did, some did not.)

Because the Law of Return is so liberal, many people who, if they were able to run to a richer and less dangerous corner of the Diaspora, would probably complete their assimilation there and disappear as Jews for good, are going in Israel to become Jews again. To these people can be added husbands and wives with no Jewish "blood" at all—estimates of such arriving non-Jews, and their children who are non-Jews by *halakhah*, range from 5 to 30 percent of the total Soviet immigration. One way or the other, these non-Jews will become not only Israelis, but legally or effectively Jews.

To be sure, the ultra-Orthodox are very unhappy about what is going on. Having jumped into

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Israeli politics with both feet, and been rewarded with the running of ministries, they now must enforce and administer a thoroughly secular law which admits *halakhic* Jews, non-*halakhic* Jews, and non-Jews alike, thinning the Jewish soup, undercutting the Jewish soul. If there were only a few cases, the Interior Ministry might have been able to refuse to register any of them as Jews. As it is, Israeli ID's are now being stamped with a disclaimer which would be incredible anywhere except in the Jewish state—"The Ministry of the Interior takes no responsibility for any of the details of this document." But there will be tens of thousands of such cases, and in the great majority of them *halakhah* will have to be bent, if not shelved. There will be lawsuits and scandals, there will be quick and easy conversions, but the rabbis will have to swim with the flood somehow, and already many new Israelis have been registered as Jews who were not Jews before and would not be Jews anywhere else.

The point is that the Israelis, living and bickering in a country with Jewish symbols and for the time being a Jewish majority, and disposing of the instruments of state, have practical, automatic solutions to and preventatives for assimilation unavailable to their brothers and sisters abroad. If you are an Israeli who is not a Christian or Muslim or Buddhist or Druse or Baha'i, and if for some reason you wish *not* to be identified as a Jew, you can deny that you are one until you are blue in the face, you can petition the secular, incorruptible Supreme Court to have "Hebrew" or "Canaanite" or "Scientologist" or "Atheist" inscribed on the nationality line of your ID, but it will not help. You will be identified as a Jew and counted and drafted as one.

These are no legal niceties. They reflect and advance two very different, indeed contrary, historical processes. The Diaspora is a Mixmaster wearing down the Jewish edges. The periphery tends to be lost there, lost probably forever. In Israel it is regained. This is one of the reasons why not a year has gone by since the Balfour Declaration that Zion's share of the Jews of the world has not grown—.084 percent in 1917, it is now 31 percent, up 2.5 percent over last year, and tomorrow it will certainly be more. Sometimes the gradient of the trend is steep—as during big immigrations like this one—sometimes extremely gentle. But for more than 70 years it has been the rule, and nothing so far has been able to halt, let alone reverse it.

The U.S.

If in Israel the prime demographic facts today are immigration and above-RL fertility, in America they are intermarriage and below-RL fertility. The phenomenon of marrying out is not unknown in Israel; it is just, by the nature of things, comparatively rare. Except for Arabs, there simply are not that many non-Jews in Israel for Jews to meet, and there is also no civil or, for Jews, non-Orthodox marriage ceremony. Intermarriage being forbidden by *halakhah*, it is hard for a non-Jew to marry a Jew without converting or going abroad to tie the knot. The upshot is that since the Jewish rate of out-marriage in Israel is well under 1 percent, intermarriage there has had the sting removed, demographically speaking.

Elsewhere, that honeyed sting can be deadly. As Arthur Ruppin, a German-born sociologist and demographer (d. 1943) put it, "Intermarriage, as soon as it appears on a large scale, marks the end of Judaism." He meant the beginning of the end of the Jews as a distinct group in any particular region or country. For Ruppin as for many others, intermarriage was the surest index and most efficient engine of assimilation. Let it go on long enough, let the children and grandchildren of intermarriages intermarry, and presumably there would be no Jews left at all.

Ruppin was a classical Zionist writing at a time when both intermarriage and anti-Semitism were booming. Intermarriage had appeared "on a large scale" in Central Europe early in the 20th century, as anyone familiar with the Prague of Kafka, the Vienna of Mahler, and the Berlin of Einstein knew. But to be scientific about it, Ruppin gave some figures: In Budapest in 1932, of every 100 Jews marrying, 18.8 went into mixed marriages. In Hamburg in 1933, it was 33, in the Trieste of Mussolini in 1927, no fewer than 56. (Sergio DellaPergola, who would occupy Ruppin's chair at the Hebrew University, was born in Trieste in 1949 and came to Israel in 1967.)

The Trieste figure, tops in the world, was, for Ruppin, proof positive of what could and would happen to any Jewish community which was small, had abandoned Orthodoxy, and was exposed for a few generations to Gentiles who were kind and cultured. Trieste was the future of the Diaspora, said Ruppin. And as far as he was concerned, the United States, where more Jews lived than in any other country, and where the intermarriage rate in the 1930's was a trifling 3 percent, was no exception—he granted it no immunity from his law.

Forty-seven years after Ruppin's death, the stateside intermarriage train has been authoritatively reported to be pulling into the Trieste station, and there is no good reason to be confident that this will be its last stop. Of the marriages contracted by Jews in America in 1985-90, according to last year's mammoth National Jewish Population Survey, slightly more than half were with non-Jews.

Publication of this figure last June was greeted with shock, resignation, and indifference by America's medley of Jews. They have been seeing their children and grandchildren marrying out for a generation. Some had tried to do something about it, to control the damage, while others thought the effort unnecessary or useless. But for anyone

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who knew the state of play, only the size of the NJPS figure could come as a surprise.

Almost from the beginning of the American Jewish demographic scare, now dating back almost 30 years, it had been the position of some analysts and communal leaders that intermarriage on a large scale need not spell big trouble for the Jews. As early as 1963, Milton Himmelfarb broached a strategy which eventually would go by the name of Outreach. Writing in this magazine, he said that since intermarriage came with the new American territory, the sensible thing for Jews to do who wanted to salvage their self-respect and do their bit for group survival was to try to convert the non-Jewish partner—if you couldn't beat them, you could attempt to get them to join you. Indeed, "with some rabbinical initiative," Himmelfarb wrote, "conversion might offset our losses by intermarriage, or actually produce a gain."

For the next generation, long after Himmelfarb himself despaired of making good on it, this was the program of the optimists among Jewish thinkers and leaders. If lots of the non-Jewish partners could be made to feel welcome and persuaded to convert, and if in any event half the children born to such couples were raised as Jews, then losses would be balanced by gains, and intermarriage might even be turned to demographic advantage. Some were convinced that this was in fact already happening. Thanks to the large numbers of the newly converted, wrote Charles Silberman in his encouraging, bestselling book, *A Certain People* (1985), intermarriage was "unlikely [to] lead to more than a slight reduction of the number of Jews, and it could bring about an increase."

Silberman's authorities on the correct interpretation of the data were the demographer Calvin Goldscheider at Brown and the sociologist Stephen Cohen, then at Queens College. They were the academic champions of the optimistic or "transformationalist" school of American Jewish demography, which argued that (a) the numbers were holding up and (b) anyway numbers alone were a red herring. If Goldscheider was generally more optimistic than Cohen, the most pessimistic of the pessimists was Elihu Bergman, who in 1977 in a notorious article in *Midstream* forecast that due to rampaging intermarriage, there would be "no more than 944,000 [Jews], and conceivably as few as 10,240" in America in 2076, the year of the tricentennial. "If present trends are not arrested, or reversed," warned Bergman, "the American Jewish community faces extinction as a significant entity, and by its own hand, during the first half of the 21st century."

BERGMAN was denounced far and wide as an alarmist and a terrible demographer. Not only were his figures wrong, but all this worry over mere quantity might well be missing the essence. True, said Goldscheider and Cohen, American Jews were changing—but their individual and group morale was higher and their clout greater than ever. The evidence was all around. Holocaust and Judaica studies were offered on just about every major campus in the country, Presidents and Senators listened closely before doing anything touching Soviet Jews or Israel, discrimination was a thing of the past, and many young American Jews, while taking full advantage of an utterly open society, were proudly and seriously and calmly digging up their roots for inspection and nurture. Even if some Jews were dropping out and/or intermarrying, putting a distance between themselves and anything Jewish, they were only a minority, leaving a big enough majority to make any talk of a demographic crisis or assimilation-avalanche peculiar and irresponsible. America, blessedly different in so many ways, would turn out different in this respect too, and its Jews would survive the kindness it was showing them.

Nevertheless, red herring or no, the numbers game was played by the optimists-transformationalists as well. For example, they said, on the fertility of the Jewish baby-boomers and feminists the final returns were not in yet. Goldscheider in the 1980's wrote that once most of this cohort of women, then in their 30's, got married, they would have their 2.1 or more children. How did he know? Well, because a sample of them had told him that this is what they expected, and as was well known, women generally had the number of children they expected to have. Silberman in 1985 wrote as if it were a sure thing. Goldscheider a year later put it more cautiously, but still with an optimistic lean: "To the extent that these expectations are realized behaviorally, American Jewish demographic continuity is not threatened."

Through the 1980's, the statistics collected in surveys of various metropolitan areas tended to cast an ever-thicker cloud of doubt over the optimists' case. It did not really seem that anything like half of the children of intermarriages were getting a Jewish upbringing, and the career women who had put off marriage and children until their biological alarm clocks went off did not seem to be having the twins and triplets needed to earn their cohort its replacement-level star. But these were local surveys using a hodgepodge of methodologies and not a national effort, so the optimists could still maintain that nothing had yet been proved or disproved.

What was needed was a national survey—something the pessimists of various shades wanted, too. Sidney Goldstein, a demographer and Goldscheider's colleague at Brown, was picked as the chief designer of the first such study since 1970. Meanwhile, DellaPergola and his Hebrew University colleague Uriel Schmelz put the moderately pessimistic case in 1986. The Israelis made bold to predict that in the next national survey it would come out that the number of core Jews was no more and maybe fewer than in 1970. They did not presume to see as far as the tricentennial, but they

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did offer projections for the year 2020, taking as a base 5.7 million American Jews in 1985. The outcome of the best case was 5.6 million, the worst 3.7 million, and the most probable 4.7 million—in any of the three cases a net loss. DellaPergola and Schmelz did not doubt that American Jews, and most of their communities, would survive. But shrinking this way, what kind of communities would they be?

The results of the 1990 NJPS pretty thoroughly confirm the pessimists. In Stage One of the project last summer, a market-research outfit collected the religious preferences of a sample of 126,000 Americans over the phone. In Stage Two, those households in which a Jew of any kind had been found were asked to participate further. And in Stage Three, interviewers led 2,441 people through long questionnaires, again by phone.

The material generated by all this labor, after due sifting, weighing, extrapolating, and arranging, provides what Barry Kosmin and Jeffrey Scheckner, heads of the research unit, call a "still frame photograph" of American Jews and the people they live with. Kosmin and Scheckner advise that this is a snapshot of a "dynamic community" in which "individuals and households are constantly moving out of the categories" which the demographers have custom-designed for them. If in DellaPergola's world round-up three categories were mentioned and only one counted, to get a grip on Jews in America today at least a dozen have to be given equal time.

Start with the 4.2 million people who if this had been a proper census would have told the voice on the telephone that they were born Jewish and remain Jewish "by religion." Group with them 185,000 "Jews by choice," that is, born Gentiles who have either converted or say they practice Judaism without having converted. Then there are 1.1 million "Born Jews With No Religion," secular types like Woody Allen, his fans, and some of his detractors. These three groups together form the core population of American Jews, "the one which most Jewish communal agencies seek as their clientele," and which comes to 5.5 million.

Moving out from this core we enter a "penumbra" or "peripheral" region, the area inhabited by DellaPergola's "extended" population. Here are the people who say they were either born Jewish or had a Jewish parent but are no longer Jews. The periphery, which the authors of the NJPS equate with the fast track to assimilation, has exploded in the last 20 years, and now numbers 1.3 million people. These include 210,000 born and raised Jewish who have converted, 415,000 mainly adult offspring of intermarriages who are practicing another religion, and 700,000 children, mostly of intermarriages where the non-Jewish parent has not converted and who are being raised in another religion. Minus the Jews-by-choice, this makes a population of 6.65 million Americans with at least one Jewish parent.

Last are the Gentiles living with core and peripheral Jews. There were 430,000 of them in 1970. Now there are 1.35 million, and when you add them to the core and the periphery, you get a "total population" of no fewer than 8.2 million people in the U.S. in "qualified Jewish households."

What all this means is another matter. The snapshot, for which the Federation of Jewish Philanthropies shelled out $400,000, is exquisitely detailed. There are charts and graphs and breakdowns upon charts and graphs and breakdowns, scrutinizing and comparing everything from every angle. Thus we learn, significantly, that in the core there are some 225,000 Jews born in the USSR and Israel. Since almost all of these immigrants arrived after 1970, it turns out that left to its own matrimonial and reproductive devices, the native-born core has indeed started to shrink.

The snapshot also contains information from which may be deduced the direction in which things are moving, and at what speed. Especially eloquent are the population pyramids. The icon representing age structure for the core population resembles a swollen barrel standing on a thin platform—there are more children aged 0-9 than 10-19, evidence of a baby boomlet in the last decade as one cohort of women hastened to have at least one child and their younger sisters got an earlier start. But everything is relative. Though some harkened to their biological clocks and had a flurry of babies before it was too late, most of Goldscheider's women, now past 40, have not had the 2.1 children they told him they were expecting. One-and-a-half must be recorded as about the final number for this group of women who tried their best to have, and do, it all.

The barrel is an aging barrel, 17 percent of it past retirement, and only 19 percent under 15 years old (compared with 14 percent and 21 percent respectively of the U.S. white population). Studying the barrel very closely, we see grandparents identifying themselves mainly as Jews-by-religion, while their children and grandchildren—those who have not seeped into the periphery—tend to be Woody Allen-ites. "A clear inter-generational pattern of assimilation is suggested," says the NJPS. The fewer foreign-born grandparents an American Jew has, the less likely he is to identify himself as a Jew-by-religion.

So what else, one is tempted to ask, is new? What is new, or at least newly indisputable, are the data on intermarriage. The trend is riveting: of the marriages dating from before 1965, 10 percent are intermarriages; from 1965-74, 25 percent; from 1974-84, 42 percent; and since 1985 more than half. Of course, the real rate of intermarriage has been and is actually even higher:

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"This picture . . . tends to underestimate the total frequency because it does not include currently married born Jews divorced or separated from an intermarriage." Simultaneously, Outreach notwithstanding, the rate at which the Gentile partner in such marriages goes over to Judaism has constantly been dropping—20 percent for the pre-1965 couples, 18 percent for 1965-74, 15 percent for 1974-84, 10 percent for the freshest cohort.

Are the children of these unions lost to the Jews? If so, it would put paid to one of the central contentions of the optimists, for whom intermarriage need not mean a net loss so long as at least half the children are raised Jewish. It emerges from the NJPS that "only 28 percent of [children in mixed households] are reported as being raised Jewish." The difference between this rate and the one reported for Prussia in 1909 by Ruppin is negligible. "Some 41 percent," the NJPS goes on, "are being raised in a non-Jewish religion," and 31 percent as "nothing." Since "mixed households seem to be the fastest growing household type . . . the current pattern probably means that there will be [further] net losses to the core Jewish population in the next generation."

Over so much bad demographic news the best thing may be to laugh. But when in early July many of the academics behind the NJPS gathered in Los Angeles with organization people to discuss the findings and what to do next, the smiles were braver than they were genuine. The underlying mood of the four-day meeting was agitated depression.

Should the organized American Jewish community circle its wagons and concentrate on serving and preserving the core, in effect kissing most of the intermarried and their children goodbye? Or should it try even harder to capture the 31 percent of the children of intermarriage who are growing up as nothing? This was the emotional and practical heart of the conference. A decision to go the first route would mean, among other things, that many American Jews, including not a few in high communal positions, would feel as though they had abandoned their flesh and blood, their personal future. "I have four sons," one of the participants told the rest during a session in the chapel of the University of Judaism. "They're all intermarried. Don't ask me to turn my back on my grandchildren!" If the sense of the LA meeting is any indication, there will probably be compromises struck—the wagons will be circled, while reinforced patrols are sent into the hills to try to coax deserters back to camp.

But darker notes were struck at the conference as well. "What do you call the grandchildren of intermarried Jews?" Milton Himmelfarb once asked. "Christians," he answered. Much the same idea was propounded by Samuel Klausner of the University of Pennsylvania. Distant from Irving Kristol politically, Klausner implicitly agrees with him that the myth of a secular (or a Judeo-Christian) society is just that, a myth, and that America is really a Christian society. The majority of American Jews are already at one—economically, educationally, recreationally, aesthetically—with the upper crust of this larger society. The last partition, the only remaining interface, is that of literal kinship, and intermarriage is tearing it down. "As Jews cease being Jews," Klausner told his very uncomfortable audience, "they become *de facto* Christians." Outreach does not work against this process. Only the reassertion of rabbinical authority, or a serious Zionist movement, can stem collapse.

Klausner's presentation rubbed most of his listeners the wrong way. Some voiced their firm conviction that American Jews can remain a separate denomination within a pluralistic, civil society. None rose to second his opinion that there were no strategies left except Orthodoxy or Zionism. Yet some of the same people who stood to reaffirm their trust in the traditional liberal pieties were the most worried about the implications of a shrinking, demoralized core.

The periphery, the NJPS had discovered to no one's astonishment, is less attached than the core is to Israel, less likely to belong to a synagogue, less likely to give to a Jewish charity, less likely to have mostly Jewish friends, less likely to consider being Jewish important. But is the core much better? Fewer than half the Americans who identify themselves as Jews belong to a synagogue. Fewer than a fifth donate to Jewish causes. If the core shrinks further, as it seems bound to do, will there be enough raisable money to fund not only immigration to Israel but day schools and old-age homes in this country? Will there be enough votes to make presidential and senatorial candidates think twice? Will there be enough Jews who care, and are organized, to do the job?

Prophecy is the riskiest of occupations. Prophesying what is to happen with the Jews, numbers-wise or otherwise, is especially risky. It is possible, of course, that the intermarriage rate in the U.S. will level off, even drop. It is possible that there will be a dramatic rise in the number of children coming out of these marriages who get such a serious Jewish upbringing that they themselves will not intermarry or will insist on the conversion of their Gentile partner. It is possible that masses of Diaspora women, with or without getting religion, will decide that hitting the replacement-level gong is more important than crashing the glass ceiling, or that Diaspora women and men will together make the bearing of Jewish children their first priority. It is possible that America's golden door will be thrown wide open to the exodus from the USSR. It is possible that a popular President will convert to Judaism, pulling millions of Gentiles after him. All these things are possible—and very unlikely.

The deep processes of Jewish history operating today make it the most likely scenario that by early

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in the next century, not only will the worldwide proportion of Jews to non-Jews have continued to shrink, but also, for the first time in a very long time, most of the remaining Jews will be no longer in the Diaspora but in Zion. Exactly when this day will come depends on many things, above all the size of the Soviet immigration to Israel. Yet even if that movement stopped tomorrow, Israel's Jewish population would still overtake America's and the Diaspora's later in the 21st century, for the same reasons that the Palestinians between the river and the sea threaten to catch up with and surpass the Israeli Jews—a superior birthrate and a population pyramid with a prepaid lease on the future.

Ruppin and DellaPergola will have been proved right. It is doubtful, however, that the vindication would please them. Only the most primitive Zionists, the most unthinking negators of the Diaspora, ever looked forward to its liquidating itself. Other sorts of Zionists have tried to weigh what is best for the Jews. It is questionable, in light of their history, most of which they made and survived without a state in Zion, that it is best for Jews to put all their eggs in one basket and not to have a Diaspora at all or, what is more probable, a panicky Diaspora or one narrowed down to religious believers, mainly Orthodox. The Diaspora and Zion will continue to need each other as *yin* needs *yang*, and both need to be cared for somehow, the irony being that the former is in greater danger of being killed by kindness than the latter by well-armed hatred.

The Jews in the U.S. today are comparable to a wee cube of sugar or grain of salt floating in a soothing bath of continental dimensions. As the sugar or salt melts, the bathwater is rendered ever so slightly sweeter or zestier. If the water temperature stays pleasantly warm, the little bit of stuff will eventually melt altogether, or be reduced numerically to a religiously committed kernel.

Will the water eternally stay delightfully, seductively warm? Classical Zionism, making no allowances for America, says no—eventually there must be an anti-Semitic reaction. This backlash, triggered by hard times and/or a lost war, will halt the melting process, driving assimilated and half-assimilated Jews back into the core if not clear out of the country to Israel. It is a catastrophic scenario, for a people not unacquainted with catastrophe. But even if you run across the most primitive Zionist in Israel, one who drags you to the late Meir Kahane's Museum of the Potential Holocaust, even he will be putting you on if he tenders you that scenario. Even he, in the privacy of his buzzing head, believes America is different, that the water will not be turning cold.

By 2021, the Diaspora will probably have quietly melted by a million or more bodies and souls. Around this diminished core, like a halo or the ripples in a pond where a stone has been tossed, many millions of Americans with a Jewish parent or grandparent will be living their lives. They will nurse or neglect or suppress memories and instincts, loyalties and revulsions and longings which, with every additional peaceful year, will fade further. Both the core of this shrunken, increasingly Orthodox Diaspora, and its huge, fading periphery will be centered in the U.S., ancestral home to millions of Barry Goldwaters and Caspar Weinbergers of both sexes.

One of them, Satchel O'Sullivan Farrow, will be at the threshold of his mid-life crisis in 2021. Will he have been a *bar-mitzvah* boy in the frightening year 2000? It will not matter to the Israeli clerks administering the Law of Return, nor will it matter that his mother was not Jewish. Even Satchel's own sons and daughters, Woody's and Mia's grandchildren, will find the welcome mat out, in the unlikely event they decide or need to change their addresses.

Thus the dialectic of the Jewish future unfolds in crablike stages, or like a sailboat tacking in a shifting wind to a harbor over the horizon. Anything is always possible. As happened in the Soviet Union through decades of intermarriage, so now on an even bigger scale in the U.S., a reservoir of millions of *potential* Jews is being formed at precisely the moment when so many actual Jews are opting out. This paradox may not be the heart of the matter, but it may turn out to be close. Time, of course, can evaporate even an ocean of ex-Jews, as it did the *conversos* in Spain. But then—for a final paradox—numbers in and of themselves do not necessarily a strong or happy or well-adapted people make. Must a smaller Jewish people, redistributed along the above lines, necessarily be a weaker or more neurotic or less capable or consequential one as it begins its next 4,000 years?

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"PC" So Far

Dinesh D'Souza

THE term "political correctness" seems to have originated in the early part of the century, when it was employed by various species of Marxists to describe and enforce conformity to their preferred ideological positions. Books, films, opinions, even historical events were termed politically correct or politically incorrect depending on whether or not they advanced a particular Marxist view. There is no indication that the revolutionary ideologues and activists of that period spoke of political correctness with any trace of irony or self-mockery.

Eventually the term dropped out of the political lexicon, only to be revived in the early 1980's when it came into use by spokesmen for assorted contemporary ideologies: black consciousness and black power, feminism, homosexual rights, and to a lesser degree pacifism, environmentalism, the counterculture in general. The new *Webster's College Dictionary*, published by Random House, defines political correctness as "marked by or adhering to a typically progressive orthodoxy on issues involving especially race, gender, sexual affinity, or ecology." These days, as most people know, the home of such "typically progressive orthodoxy" is the American university.

Like the Stalinists and Trotskyites of an earlier era, contemporary campus activists maintain that "everything is political," and thus to them it seems quite proper to inquire whether classroom lectures, the use of language, and even styles of dress and demeanor reflect a politically correct stance or not. Indeed, many of today's activists are not content with espousing politically correct views themselves, but seek to impose them by force on the new generation of students. So it is that as American society at large is moving toward greater tolerance of heterodox opinion, American universities, ostensibly dedicated to the free traffic of ideas, have been moving in the opposite direction, becoming (in the memorable phrase of Abigail Thernstrom) "islands of repression in a sea of freedom."

More than a hundred universities have instituted censorship codes which typically outlaw racially and sexually "stigmatizing" or offensive speech. Many of the codes are quite broad and elastic: at the University of Connecticut, for example, violations of the ethnic harassment policy, for which the penalty ranges from a reprimand to expulsion, include the "use of derogatory names," "inconsiderate jokes," and even "misdirected laughter" and "conspicuous exclusion from conversation." Although a federal judge struck down as unconstitutional the censorship code in place at the University of Michigan—where a student, hauled up before a disciplinary council for making negative remarks about homosexuality, was recently sentenced to write an apology and to attend sensitivity sessions to transform his unenlightened views—similar regulations are being enforced on many other campuses, and at private colleges they may be immune from First Amendment scrutiny.

The greatest obstacle to free speech on campus, however, is not the explicit censorship code but a political and social atmosphere in which politically incorrect opinions are discouraged, vilified, and ostracized. Although not a numerical majority, PC activists on campus constitute a kind of "moral majority," enjoying enormous leverage over a predominantly liberal community which is already hypersensitive to hints of racism or bigotry. In several cases, some highly publicized and others relatively unknown, professors who have dissented from PC nostrums have found themselves unemployed, or disgraced by administrative rebuke and sanctions. Many other professors and students have gotten the message: rather than risk being drawn into a vortex of accusations, sensitivity indoctrination, or censure, they simply abstain from articulating unpopular views; they censor themselves.

NONE of this, of course, is news to readers of COMMENTARY, where articles about the radical agenda of today's academic activists have been appearing for years. But many mass publications took their first notice of political correctness *per se* only about a year ago. In "The Rising Hegemony of the Politically Correct" (New York *Times*, October 29, 1990), Richard Bernstein reported a pressure to conform to an "unofficial ideology" among students and faculty of American universities. At a conference in Berkeley, "Political Correctness and Cultural Studies," Bernstein interviewed a number of academics who did not deny that they were engaged in a project of ideological consciousness-

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raising, but asserted that it was justified by the need to topple "patriarchal hegemony" and the "white male power structure."

Then on December 24, 1990, *Newsweek*, itself a magazine with a "progressive" reputation, surprised everyone with a cover story on today's campus "Thought Police." The article was a parade of horror stories, each showing how professors and students who trespassed on prevailing orthodoxies were made to suffer. Still, the article also implied that university leaders who permitted these excesses were in pursuit of a good cause, and that historical and demographic changes on campus were anyway bound to provoke tensions.

In early January of this year, *New York* magazine entered the fray with a vehement blast from John Taylor, "Are You Politically Correct?" Taylor made cruel fun of the PC lexicon, according to which, for instance, pets must be called animal companions and, in one extreme version, short people "vertically challenged." Chuckle we may, wrote Taylor, but many university officials take all this very seriously; an official document at Smith College, for instance, warns students to eschew not only such evils as racism and sexism, but also heterosexism and even lookism—"the belief that appearance is an indicator of a person's value; the construction of a standard for beauty and attractiveness; oppression through stereotypes and generalizations of both those who do not fit that standard and those who do."

While the article in *New York* accurately captured the Star Chamber quality of the political environment on campus, it gave no plausible explanation of who precisely the new McCarthyites were and what they sought to accomplish. Like the *Newsweek* story, however, Taylor's article did help somewhat to delegitimize the PC authoritarians. PC was starting to look uncool.

What followed was an avalanche of critical scrutiny, both in the serious and the popular press, and on television. On February 18, the *New Republic* published a special issue, "Race on Campus," which included troubling vignettes from several prestigious campuses, an editorial attack on politically correct conformism, and a curious but important article by Irving Howe defending the traditional Western canon. The *New Republic* subsequently published a number of other exposes and essays, including an enthusiastic review of my book, *Illiberal Education*, by the Marxist historian Eugene Genovese, who issued a resounding call for an alliance across the political spectrum to resist PC ideologues and acquiescent administrators. In April, *Time* magazine warned of a "culture of forbidden questions" and a "new intolerance" on campus, while the New York *Times Magazine* published a heavily sarcastic account of the annual convention of the politically correct Modern Language Association, where all the best-attended sessions appeared to focus on sexual deviation, and where classics like Herman Melville's *Moby-Dick* fell into the deepest disrepute ("There's not a woman in his book, the plot hinges on unkindness to animals, and the black characters mostly drown by chapter 29").

Where the print media led, television quickly followed. After a talk-show appearance to publicize my book, I was approached by a prominent newscaster who wanted to confide that "all of us here are concerned about the thought police who are roaming our nation's campuses." (This was a much more extreme statement than anything I had or would have uttered—but such is the way of the media.) And on *Good Morning America*, where I was to debate the chancellor of UCLA, the show began with an interview of a pretty young Filipina who despite outstanding grades and extracurricular achievements had been refused admission to Berkeley because, she said, of an anti-Asian quota. When the anchorman kicked off our debate by demanding to know from Chancellor Young what he had to say to the aggrieved young woman, Young's woeful look drove home the degree to which the pendulum had shifted: to the media, university spokesmen, once liberalism's champions, were now its ogres.

How have these spokesmen responded to criticism of the policies they have devised and implemented? So far, with only a couple of exceptions, by a deafening silence.

At first this could perhaps be attributed to the simple bewilderment of a class of people so accustomed to approbation that they had lost even the reflex habit of self-defense. But when weeks and months passed without response or rebuttal, one could only conclude that university leaders were unable to account effectively for their policies, and had decided to lie low until the storm passed—a strikingly pusillanimous posture for those usually so quick to claim a special social prerogative to engage issues of principle.

In any event, the burden of defending PC policies fell at first to political columnists, many of whom had not set foot on a campus for years, and to faculty radicals. In the case of the latter, the results were embarrassing. At the June conference of the Modern Language Association, for example, the consensus seemed to be that no defense was necessary. The problem was instead that ordinary Americans did not understand the incredible complexities of academia—"It's like trying to reduce a Henry James novel to a telegram," protested Martha Banta of UCLA's English department—or were just plain stupid, "people who don't know the difference between Plato and Nato," in the words of Berkeley sociologist Todd Gitlin, who was head of Students for a Democratic Society in the late 1960's. The only practical suggestion came from Professor Gene Ruoff of the University of Illinois, who urged that radical faculty mount a massive letter-writing and op-ed offensive to explain current academic trends to the general public. But he also conceded the risks of such a campaign; after all, many if not most Americans hold convictions diametrically opposed to those he wished to defend.

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By summer, however, it became possible to trace the contours of an argument on behalf of political correctness. The general line, as advanced by Henry Louis Gates, Jr., chairman of Afro-American Studies at Harvard, was that as America becomes a more diverse society, the rules of academic life, heretofore shaped by white males of European origin, will have to be modified in order to reflect multiple voices and interests. Current university policies are based on the recognition that persons of color cannot be expected to homogenize themselves into "an America in cultural white face." A new social compact needs to be negotiated and then institutionalized; while critics of PC may be right to point out a few unfortunate excesses, they have diverted attention from that grand and necessary process.

A similar line was taken by the feminist scholar Catharine Stimpson of Rutgers. In the first place, she maintained, the curriculum has always harbored acknowledged or covert ideological bias. And in the second place, PC activists are not politicizing the curriculum but only attempting to make higher education more accessible, to open closed doors, to promote inclusion. If anything, they should be congratulated for their honesty in unmasking the racial, patriarchal, and heterosexual biases in the so-called great books.

A few have gone farther. On the MacNeil-Lehrer show, Professor Stanley Fish of Duke University asserted that freedom of speech is only one of several competing values worth preserving; sometimes it must be balanced against, or subordinated to, other desiderata. Richard Rosser, president of the Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, while conceding that university codes of censorship may be regrettable, asserted that they are the only way to curb the current campus epidemic of hate speech and racial epithets.

Mainly, however, the defenders of PC have not sought to justify university policies but to shift the burden to the other side. The threat, they say, is a manufactured one, or at the very least has been greatly exaggerated by conservatives for their own nefarious political ends. "Where's this left-wing reign of terror on campus?" asks the columnist Michael Kinsley in mock-innocence. In a New York *Times* review of my book, Nancy Dye, a dean at Vassar, came close to achieving Orwellian inversion with her charge that the *critics* of PC have framed their case "entirely in polarities," ignoring the "vast middle ground" and mistaking healthy and constructive debate for intimidation. The American Council on Education, which reflects the views of the academic establishment, released a survey of campus administrators most of whom offered a serene and untroubled portrait of the higher-education landscape and failed to see political correctness as a serious problem. The *Village Voice* and the *Nation* have also treated the PC threat as a mythic concoction of the right wing, and Brent Staples of the New York *Times* went so far as to imply that it was a "bogeyman magnified by leftover cold-war hysteria." The darkest pitch of all came from Joel Conarroe, president of the Guggenheim foundation, who suggested that the true goal of critics of PC was to legitimize racism, sexism, and homophobia "as a matter of high principle."*

UNFORTUNATELY for those who would deny the reality of PC, however, the facts continue to speak for themselves. As many a politically "incorrect" professor and student can testify, censorship codes are on the books and are being enforced. It has gotten to the point where even some university administrators have begun to admit their concern. Yale president Benno Schmidt, for instance, has warned that nowhere is free speech more endangered today than on the American campus. In his annual report to the Harvard community, outgoing president Derek Bok cited the politicization of the university, primarily along race and gender lines, as one of the greatest perils to liberal education.

If there is any good news, it lies in these isolated voices from within the community of university administrators, bolstered by an un-PC faculty organization like the National Association of Scholars; but it lies even more in the public criticism that has been aired. That criticism has indeed placed PC cadres somewhat on the defensive, a little less quick to ostracize dissenters—especially when there is a chance their activities may be exposed by the media. Even some sensitivity-indoctrination programs now seek "balance" (which usually means allowing one representative of a non-conforming view for every dozen PC advocates). When it comes to the curriculum, although the drive to replace Western-culture requirements with "multicultural" or non-Western programs is already far advanced, it now has to contend with an intellectual opposition, sometimes from emboldened faculty liberals.

But the bad news is that the radicals are deeply entrenched in academia, and have no plans to go elsewhere. In many departments, particularly ones like ethnic and women's studies, faculty ideologues seek to perpetuate their position by hiring only like-minded people, limiting the range of views in some disciplines to what Eugene Genovese terms "a diversity of radical positions." Policies such as racial preference are also thoroughly institutionalized, and have generated vested interests not only among beneficiary groups but also among enforcement bureaucracies.

In short, although the fight against political correctness has so far gone well in the open air of public opinion, the fight on the ground has barely begun.

* Connaroe's sense of proportion was on display in another PC-related context this season, the fight over the President's nomination of Carol Iannone to the National Council for the Humanities. Miss Iannone had dared, in COMMENTARY, to judge black writers by the same standards she applied to white; for this violation of a PC code she was likened by Connaroe to Paul de Man, the Yale critic who during World War II was a Nazi apologist.

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Hispanics vs. Their Leaders

Linda Chavez

ASSIMILATION has become a dirty word in American politics, invoking images of people, cultures, traditions forged into a colorless alloy in an indifferent melting pot. Where once the goal of new arrivals was to gain admittance to the American mainstream as rapidly as possible, now ethnic leaders advocate that groups remain separate, that native cultures and languages be preserved intact, and that every effort be made by society to accommodate ethnic "difference."

Hispanic leaders have been among the most vociferous in this regard, speaking on behalf of a group that now numbers over 22 million. They insist that Hispanic children be taught in Spanish; that Hispanic adults be allowed to cast ballots in their native language, and have the right to vote in districts where Hispanics make up the majority of voters; that Hispanic ethnicity constitute an entitlement to a certain percentage of jobs and college admissions; and that many of these same benefits be conferred on immigrants from Latin America, even those who are in the country illegally. The terrible irony is that these positions, many of which have already been enshrined in policy, fly in the face of the expressed interests of Hispanics themselves, who, like millions of immigrants before them, see their best opportunity for success in assimilating to the common culture of America. The progress they have already made toward that goal stands in danger of being hindered or even halted by the self-perpetuating blindness of their elites.

HISPANIC leadership on the state and national level comes essentially in two forms: organizations like the National Council of La Raza or the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), and elected officials. Both claim to represent the Hispanics in whose name they speak, but the claim is dubious, not only in the case of the various organizations, which are obviously not responsible to constituencies of voters, but even in the case of elected legislators. For the simple fact is that, large as population figures are, nearly half of all Hispanic adults in the United States are immigrants, and most of these are not yet citizens.

How, then, do Hispanic leaders achieve and maintain their power? Unable, for the most part, to translate numbers into voting strength, they have attempted instead to gerrymander electoral districts in order to create safe seats. The Voting Rights Act of 1974 has become the vehicle for carving out such districts. In effect, the Act requires proportional representation in elective offices for both blacks and Hispanics. Under court interpretations of the Act, Hispanics are virtually guaranteed the right to districts in which they are a majority of the *population*, not necessarily of the eligible voters. The result has been the creation of what the political scientist Peter Skerry has aptly dubbed "rotten boroughs, with large and growing numbers of 'constituents' unable to vote."

In Los Angeles County, for example, a court-ordered voting district was created in 1991 so as to give Hispanics a seat on the board of supervisors. Nearly one million persons of voting age live in the new district, which is 61 percent Hispanic, but fewer than 83,000 (about 8 percent of the voting-age population) voted in a hotly contested election for the first Hispanic supervisor. The usual reasons were adduced for the pathetically low turnout—voter apathy, bad timing, etc.—but the best explanation is that the district includes a huge immigrant population, legal and illegal, unable to vote. Whatever the reason for it, the low turnout will undoubtedly be cited in the future as a reason to push still harder for court-ordered proportional representation.

One remedy that has been proposed for the meager participation of voters is to provide election materials in Spanish. In some 375 political jurisdictions, voters are entitled to such materials for all federal elections, and several jurisdictions require Spanish-language ballots for state and local elections as well. The federal requirement, part of the 1975 amendments to the Voting Rights Act, was obtained by means of a disingenuous campaign by Hispanic activists to persuade Congress that an English-language ballot was to His-

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panics what the literacy test had been to blacks in the South—namely, a device whose sole purpose was to prevent qualified persons from voting.

In fact, however, as Abigail Thernstrom has documented in *Whose Votes Count?*, there is virtually no evidence that language has been a significant impediment to Hispanic political participation. While it is true that in some parts of the country Hispanics were (and still are) less likely to vote than either whites or blacks, the problem is not language but the fact that, as then-Senator Barry Goldwater put it during the hearings on the issue, "40 percent of all Spanish-origin persons who were not registered in 1974 reported they were not citizens."

A no less disingenuous suggestion to boost the numbers of Hispanic voters was put forward recently by Joaquin Avila, former president of the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund: allow non-citizens to vote. The same idea was floated by another leader, Jose Angel Gutierrez, at a 1990 conference of La Raza. Takoma Park, Maryland, known for its "progressive" politics, is in fact about to become the first jurisdiction to grant voting rights in municipal elections to the thousands of Latin immigrants who live there. And some non-citizens have already been voting even without such "rights." A 1982 investigation by the U.S. attorney in San Francisco revealed that in nine northern California counties, votes were being cast not only by non-citizens but also by a number of persons who were in the country illegally.

Ethnic politics is an old and honored tradition in the United States, but the rules under which Hispanics now operate—the rules of affirmative action—are very far from traditional. As Skerry notes, "In the past, ethnic leaders were obliged to translate raw numbers into organizational muscle in the factories or at the polls. . . . In the affirmative-action state, Hispanic leaders do not require voters, or even protesters—only bodies." Hispanics can now be "represented" on city councils, county boards, even in Congress by officials elected by barely a handful of the adult Hispanic population. Hispanic immigrants need not become U.S. citizens for their political weight to be felt; indeed, as the San Francisco incident illustrates, Hispanic votes can be counted even when they are cast by persons who have no legal right to vote—or, in some cases, to be in the United States at all. This is a pernicious situation, unhealthy for Hispanics and for the American political system; the only interests it promotes are those of Hispanic "leaders."

If Hispanics are ill-served by their leaders' notion of political representation, they are positively damaged by those same leaders' policies in the areas of language and culture. Most Hispanics, for example, accept the fact that the United States is an English-speaking country, and many embrace that fact. According to a Houston *Chronicle* poll last year, 87 percent of Hispanics believed it was their "duty to learn English," and a majority believed English should be adopted as the official language of the country. Polls taken in California, Colorado, and elsewhere have come up with similar findings.

Yet Hispanic leaders have consistently advocated public policies aimed at allowing Hispanics to function indefinitely in their native language. Nearly two-thirds of all first-grade students from Spanish-speaking homes receive reading instruction in Spanish in public school; 72 percent of them receive oral-development instruction in Spanish. This stands in marked contrast to the practice of non-English-speaking children from other ethnic backgrounds, only 8 percent of whom receive reading instruction and only 16 percent of whom receive oral-language development in their native language.

Nor is bilingual education the only area in which efforts have been under way to forge a separate Spanish-language "track" in American public life. Ballots and election materials, as we have seen, are another. And some Hispanic leaders have gone still further to promote what they recklessly refer to as "language rights" in the courts and through legislation. One such proposal would amend civil-rights statutes to add language to race, color, gender, and national origin as a basis upon which it would be forbidden to discriminate—this, despite the fact that unlike the other four qualities, which are immutable, language is learned, and on that basis employers have generally been given broad discretion to discriminate among employees. Hispanic civil-rights groups have also sued employers for demanding that employees speak English on the job. In at least one instance (*Yniguez* v. *Mofford*), a federal court in Arizona found for the plaintiffs, declaring that a government worker has a constitutional right to use Spanish in the performance of his official duties (and thus striking down a recently passed amendment making English the official language of government in Arizona). The case is now on appeal.

It is important to stress that the purpose of "language-rights" proponents is not to protect the right of individuals to speak whatever language they choose in private—a right no one is disputing—but to promote the use of a language other than English in *public* activities. The former mayor of Miami, Maurice Ferre, went so far as to boast in 1982 that "Within ten years there will not be a word of English spoken [in Miami] . . . one day residents will have to learn Spanish or leave."

"Language-rights" proponents have another aim in mind as well. Like previous immigrant groups, most Hispanics do want to preserve their own language and culture. This is a responsibility which, again in the manner of other immigrant

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groups, they are perfectly prepared to shoulder themselves. Here too, however, their leaders have adopted a more radical stance. What these leaders want—and increasingly are getting—is the maintenance of Hispanic language and culture at public expense, with all that that entails by way of dependency, bureaucratization, and loss of control by those presumably being benefited.

It is instructive to compare today's leaders in this respect with yesterday's. At its founding in 1929, LULAC, the oldest Hispanic civil-rights group still in existence, was a decidedly assimilationist organization. Only U.S. citizens could become members, and Spanish was not used in the official proceedings. In its declaration of aims (unchanged to this day), LULAC includes among the duties of members the following:

> To foster the acquisition and facile use of the official language of our country that we may thereby equip ourselves and our families for the fullest enjoyment of our rights and privileges and the efficient discharge of our duties and obligation to this, our country.

Today, few Hispanic organizations on their own promote English—or civics—classes for Latin immigrants. Instead of imbuing immigrants with a sense of the importance of acquiring and adopting the common English language, Hispanic leaders place greater emphasis on retaining Spanish, and thus encourage Hispanics to remain separate from the culture in which they reside.

The same deleterious mindset permeates the thinking and activity of Hispanic leaders in the field of education. These leaders like to point out how poorly schooled Hispanics are; high-school dropout rates, for example, are said to be in the range of 50-60 percent for the Mexican-origin population. The purpose of such exercises, of course, is to win more and bigger government programs. Yet the analyses themselves are often suspect, failing to differentiate between new immigrants and native-born; the latter have in fact made important strides in closing the education gap, at least at the secondary-school level, and are even approaching non-Hispanic whites in their high-school graduation rates.

It is true that beyond the secondary level Hispanic education seems to be stalled. Even though, thanks to affirmative action and federal student aid, it is now substantially easier to go to college than it was twenty or thirty years ago, the proportion of Mexican Americans graduating today is unchanged from forty years ago, and most Hispanic students who enroll in four-year colleges do not complete the degree. Yet government can only do so much in promoting higher education for Hispanics—or any group. Only a substantial commitment to education on the part of this generation of Hispanic parents can make a difference, and that commitment is one that will entail personal sacrifice—just as it has done for generations of poor and immigrant parents.

Unfortunately, it is just this idea of personal sacrifice, or rather the ethic of self-help and advancement which underlies it, that the politics of the Hispanic leadership aims to subvert. Hispanics have been urged to adopt instead the ethic of entitlement—the belief that jobs, advancement, even political power should be theirs by reason of their status as official "victims." Among the bizarre effects this leads to is an investment in victimization for its own sake. Ethnic leaders have a positive interest in showing that Hispanics are, as the head of one organization put it, "the poorest of the poor, the most segregated minority in schools, the lowest-paid group in America, and the least educated minority in this nation." To succeed at the entitlement game, Hispanics must continually establish their failure.

This is a spiritually corrupting exercise, and it has already begun to set Hispanics not only against other groups who are in competition for the limited slots set aside by affirmative-action programs, but even against one another. Recently, for example, a group of Mexican American firemen in San Francisco challenged the right of two Spanish Americans to participate in an affirmative-action program; the claim was that the Spanish Americans, with their European roots, were unlikely to have suffered discrimination comparable to other Hispanics. It was even recommended that a panel of twelve Hispanics be established to certify who was and who was not Hispanic. Such are the outrages to which the politics of entitlement leads.

Ultimately, entitlements based on victim status rob Hispanics of real power—the power that comes by overcoming disadvantage through one's own efforts. Millions of Hispanics have been seeking empowerment and equality by just this route; they are assimilating and being absorbed into the American mainstream. But to do so they must act in defiance of Hispanic leaders, who obstinately cling to policies designed to keep them permanent strangers in their American home.

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Homage to Jacob Katz

David Singer

THE FOX, Isaiah Berlin reminds us, knows many things, while the hedgehog knows one big thing. As a historian, Jacob Katz, the distinguished Jerusalem scholar now in his 86th year, is both a fox and a hedgehog. Katz's writings on Jewish history exhibit an extraordinary sweep, in terms both of the periods he covers—from the Middle Ages (*Tradition and Crisis*) down to the Nazi era (*From Prejudice to Destruction*)—and of the subjects he deals with—Jewish-Christian relations (*Exclusiveness and Tolerance*), Richard Wagner's anti-Semitism (*The Darker Side of Genius*), the interaction between Jewish law and mysticism (*Halakhah and Kabbalah*), the ideological foundations of Zionism (*Jewish Emancipation and Self-Emancipation*). Yet for all their range and diversity, Katz's writings speak to a unified conception or, better, methodology.

Katz is prominently identified with the "Jerusalem School" of Jewish historiography, centered at the Hebrew University, whose leading spokesman was the late Gershom Scholem. While the founding members of this school explored a great many areas and made use of a range of methodologies, they shared a number of basic assumptions about the nature of the Jewish historiographical enterprise. Most crucially, they believed that Zionism and, especially, the establishment of a Jewish state would pave the way for a "normalized" study of the Jewish past, by which they meant that Jewish historiography would be freed of its apologetic strain. This position was set forth by Scholem in a 1945 essay, "Reflections on the Science of Judaism," and again in a 1960 lecture, "The Science of Judaism—Then and Now."

Katz's own historical approach is comprised of three key elements. The first is an emphasis on social as against political history. Thus, in his first book, *Tradition and Crisis*, he presents a general portrait of Jewish society at the end of the Middle Ages, with chapters on communal structure, economic activities, education, religious life, and family patterns. In *Exclusiveness and Tolerance*, he demonstrates how economic and social pressures generated at the mass level created the stimulus for an ongoing rabbinic reassessment of the status of Christianity in medieval and early modern times. Similarly, *Jews and Freemasons in Europe* is an attempt to "trace the routes by which . . . former ghetto-dwellers found their way into the social circles of their neighbors."

Not that Katz's books are compilations of social and economic data. Far from it. Rather, as the late Ben Halpern observed, Katz is a generalizer, always on the lookout for the defining features of his subject. Perhaps the most important generalizing abstraction in his writings is that of "Jewish traditional society." A traditional society is one which "regards its existence as based upon a common body of knowledge and values handed down from the past," and for Jews, Katz maintains, such a society was in place from the talmudic era down to the age of Jewish emancipation. A considerable portion of Katz's work is taken up with examining how, in the European Ashkenazi context, Jewish traditional society was constituted, sustained, and, ultimately, dissolved.

A second key element of Katz's historical approach is the systematic utilization of *halakhic* (legal) materials as historical sources. This is an area in which he has done much pioneering work, and it has enabled him to present an exceptionally rich and finely textured picture of Jewish traditional society. In each case, he examines *halakhic* materials with an eye toward elucidating a larger issue, namely, the relationship between religious norms and social reality.

The third element is, simply, Katz's historical imagination, which is nothing if not lively, treating familiar subjects in thoroughly unfamiliar ways. Two examples are *Exclusiveness and Tolerance* and *Jews and Freemasons in Europe*. The former volume stands virtually alone in providing a coherent account of how Jews in the medieval and early modern periods assessed Christianity as a religion, while the latter, which examines the entry of Jews into Gentile society via, as Scholem once put it, the "basement" rather than the "salon," is absolutely unique in detailing the place of Jews in the semi-clandestine world of the Masons.

THE elements of Katz's historical methodology come together in beautiful fashion in *The "Shabbes Goy,"* the latest of his books to appear in English.* Indeed, one can scarcely conceive of a scholar other than Katz who would devote a full-length study to the seemingly trivial—some would say ludicrous—subject of the Sabbath Gentile, i.e., a non-Jew who performs the labor of a Jew on Sabbaths and festivals. The very title of Katz's book, employing the Yiddish form, is likely to prove embarrassing, since from a modern perspective it carries connotations of, on the one hand, religious hypocrisy and opportunism, and, on the other, an unseemly dependence on outsiders. Yet as Katz points out, during the whole of the period that "Jewish tradition reigned supreme," employment of a Sabbath Gentile "caused no embarrassment whatsoever."

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* *The "Shabbes Goy": A Study in Halakhic Flexibility.* Translated by Yoel Lerner. Jewish Publication Society, 253 pp., $22.95.

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Given Katz's scholarly orientation, the subject of the Sabbath Gentile turns out to be a natural. It takes in the weekly religious observance of the masses of Jews, and necessitates a critical scrutiny of *halakhic* materials. Moreover, the subject illuminates "the interdependence of Jew and non-Jew in various economic fields." These include Gentile servants working in Jewish homes, Jews entering into business partnerships with non-Jews, Jews renting fields and factories to Gentiles and vice-versa, and Jews traveling on ships and in caravans operated by non-Jews.

In grappling with the issue of the Sabbath Gentile, Katz indicates, rabbinic scholars had room for "innovation and original solution" because the Talmud's teachings on the matter were not entirely free of ambiguity. A given *halakhic* ruling would be shaped both by considerations internal to the *halakhic* process itself and by the "pressure of existing conditions." When confronted with a popular practice at odds with the codified legal tradition, a rabbinic scholar had to decide whether to ignore the matter (on the basis of the Talmudic principle that "it is better for them to act erroneously than to sin deliberately") or to seek to uproot it. Katz cites numerous examples of decisions going in both directions.

If rabbinic scholars approached the issue of the Sabbath Gentile by and large from the perspective of the *halakhic* tradition, the masses of Jews were guided by what Katz characterizes as "ritual instinct." Within the framework of a traditional society, the prevalent Sabbath prohibitions, involving physical action on the part of the Jew, were "second nature," a powerful "time-linked taboo." This was not the case, however, with actions performed by a non-Jew on a Jew's behalf, especially when the Jew "did not need to instruct [the non-Jew] on the Sabbath about what to do, the Gentile being sufficiently trained to act on his own initiative." In such a situation, the laity tended to be more permissive than the rabbis.

In tracing the "variation and evolution" of the law of the Sabbath Gentile, Katz takes in a tremendous range of material. Perhaps the most intriguing section of *The "Shabbes Goy"* is that devoted to developments in the early modern period, when Sabbath observers became for the first time a minority in the Jewish community. For rabbinic scholars this posed the fundamental issue, "Should one rule leniently, lest one deter the questioner from accepting the decision? Or, on the contrary, should one rule strictly and thus try to limit Sabbath desecration?" The majority, including Rabbis Jacob Ettlinger and Isaac Dov Bamberger in Germany, and Rabbis Abraham Sofer and Judah Aszod in Hungary, chose the second path; in contrast, Rabbi Azriel Hildesheimer, the leading disciple of Rabbi Ettlinger, maintained that in the face of a generation that was, as he puts it, "spiritually impoverished, tested day after day by those who openly violate the sanctity of the Sabbath," it was "proper and even religiously required to rule permissively wherever possible."

It would be a mistake to think that a steady decline in the number of Sabbath observers in the modern period has led to fewer questions about Sabbath-related matters being posed to *halakhic* scholars. In truth, as Katz observes, this area has undergone "tremendous expansion." He explains why:

> The weakening of the restrictive framework of traditional society, which made it possible for others to cast off the *halakhic* yoke, motivated the Orthodox to harness themselves to it all the more tightly. Precisely because from this time on a compelling social pattern no longer existed, accepted community practice and written *halakhic* rules, together with the *halakhic* authorities who expounded them, assumed a unique status, almost unprecedented in previous generations. An observant Jew, unqualified to find his way through the complexities of *halakhic* literature . . . had no choice but to turn to recognized *halakhic* authorities, his local rabbi or a renowned *halakhic* expert, who were willing to give a ruling in every case of uncertainty.

As in most other spheres of observance, "personal loyalty to the most precise *halakhic* rulings" has become the order of the day with regard to the laws of the Sabbath Gentile.

While Katz enjoys an enviable reputation as a scholar, his work has not received the kind of systematic attention given to several other members of the "Jerusalem School." No doubt this has something to do with the "fox"-like aspect of his writings, which take in a great many subject areas and combine the perspective of the historian with that of the sociologist. Few, in an age of specialization, are prepared to come to grips with so expansive a body of work.

Still, Katz's individual volumes have been reviewed in the scholarly journals, and almost always in enthusiastic terms. Criticism, to the degree that it is to be found, has focused on two points. Some, uncomfortable with Katz's mode of generalizing abstraction, have noted that nearly all of his materials are drawn from the Ashkenazi context. How different would the picture be, they ask, if he also took account of Sephardi experience? Others, uncomfortable with Katz's historical rendering of the *halakhah*, have suggested that in tracing the development of Jewish law over time he gives too much weight to external, material elements, and too little weight to the internal logic of the law.

Most certainly, however, this latter criticism cannot be directed against *The "Shabbes Goy."* Moreover, the poise and self-confidence that Katz brings to the study of the Sabbath Gentile are characteristic of his work as a whole (and can incidentally be seen to good effect in his Hebrew memoirs, *With My Own Eyes* [1989]). As a historian, Katz is fully in charge—controlling his sources, shaping them into meaningful patterns, and presenting them in such a way as to illuminate their larger significance. While Katz clearly believes in the inherent worth and dignity of the study of Jewish history, his writings are devoid of any trace of parochialism or special pleading. This is what Zionist-Israeli normalization was meant to achieve, and in Jacob Katz it has achieved a stunning fruition.

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Power Broker

COUNSEL TO THE PRESIDENT: A MEMOIR. By CLARK CLIFFORD with RICHARD HOLBROOKE. *Random House. 709 pp. $25.00.*

Reviewed by MARK FALCOFF

THE cover of this handsome volume is graced by a somewhat flattering oil painting of the author, and the title is highlighted by a row of five-pointed stars apparently purloined from the Presidential Seal. The message is clear: this is a valediction, intended to climax and celebrate fifty years in the epicenter of power and policy. Yet such are the anomalies of fate (and of publishing) that by the time *Counsel to the President* appeared in the stores, Clark Clifford, now 84, found himself facing possible indictment for his alleged role in the largest banking scandal in history. *Newsweek*'s often vicious "Conventional Wisdom Watch" (August 6) put it this way: "Old CW: Eminent statesman. New CW: Craven influence peddler."

It is regrettable that Clifford's problems (the political equivalent of a multiple-vehicle accident) came to light at the same time as his book, because many potential readers may be thus inclined to pass it by, when in fact it is one of the more interesting memoirs to emerge from Washington in some time. This is mostly due to the fact that its author, after all, is not precisely a nobody. He has been a key figure since the end of World War II; he was present at dozens of major historic events—from Winston Churchill's "Iron Curtain" speech in Fulton, Missouri in 1946 to the reversal of U.S. policy in Vietnam in 1968; and at times he played a crucial role in shaping the outcomes of those events. And the book is of considerable interest in yet another way: the pages are crowded with original material (notes, quotations from cabinet meetings, and so forth) which afford a fascinating sense of texture and much new insight. Most of the time, too, it is a downright good read—a credit to the literary skills of Clifford, or his co-author Richard Holbrooke, or some talented ghost-writer, or possibly all three.

Inevitably, this is also a partisan book—fiercely so, in fact. Democrats are responsible for all the good things that have happened in this country over the past fifty years, Republicans for most or all of our misfortunes, past and present. (Some of Clifford's considerable argumentative skills as a lawyer are revealed in the chapter where he manages to transfer a good part of the blame for the Vietnam war onto President *Eisenhower.*) Quite often Clifford's version of the past reminds me of the portraits painted by a certain Argentine society artist of the 1920's. As a nephew explained it to me some decades later, the artist had been trained in Germany to get the eyes just right. "The rest of the face—well, that," the nephew added, "they taught him to *arrange.*" Much the same seems to be the case here: there is a crucial kernel of truth, but how much the rest of it is to be believed varies with one's own direct knowledge of the subjects treated.

There is also a slight but irritating "presentism" which periodically shapes (or rather, misshapes) the narrative, so that values current in Democratic circles today are read back into the past to give the protagonist a more "progressive" image in retrospect. Interestingly, however, Clifford is not a bit convincing in this guise: he still reveals himself to be the archetypal representative of "the old politics" of the pre-1968 Democratic party. This book, indeed, reminds us what a fine thing that was.

CLARK CLIFFORD was born in St. Louis shortly after the turn of the century into a reasonably cultured middle-class family which seems to have experienced downward mobility. He was a talented provincial; after passing through local schools, he was admitted to the bar and married a hometown girl. Entering the practice of law in the late 20's, he managed to prosper even during the Depression. He says now that he never expected to leave St. Louis or the life he led there; but then the war came. Clifford entered the Navy as a commissioned officer, and thanks to some Missouri connections, found himself stationed in Washington. In 1945 his fellow Missourian, Harry Truman, quite unexpectedly succeeded Franklin D. Roosevelt, and Clifford, who had barely been to sea, was suddenly appointed one of the new President's naval aides. Leaving the service after the war, he stayed on at the White House as a speechwriter and staffer.

During the Truman administration Clifford seems to have been everywhere: involved in labor showdowns with John L. Lewis, head of the United Mine Workers, and in political confrontations with Vice-President Henry Wallace (who resigned to challenge Truman from the Left in the 1948 elections). He played a key role in the reorganization of the military services and what became the Defense Department after the war. He was actively involved in the formulation of the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan, and in the creation of the CIA, the National Security Council, and the FBI's loyalty program. He was hip-deep in the drafting of Truman's Fair Deal; Point Four; racial desegregation of the armed forces; and the 1948 presidential campaign.

After Truman's reelection, Clifford remained on the White House staff for only one more year, resigning to go into private practice. Today, when government officials seem to pass through the revolving door with no more than decent speed, this hardly seems odd. But it was audacious at the time. Clifford was no less ambitious than those of his colleagues who chose

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to remain on the "inside," but his was a more dispassionate form of ambition—colder, more calculating, more intelligent. He grasped that you could actually count for more on the outside, as long as you could get your telephone calls returned. He became the first of the great modern Washington power brokers.

This meant he was often called in to put out fires, or to smooth out differences between vain and petulant rivals within the same party, or even (in one hilarious anecdote) to attract guests to a "cocktail" party hosted by a teetotaling Senator. He flourished even in the 1952-1960 period of Republican ascendancy. But he really came into his own during the Kennedy administration, which he helped to assemble. To the Kennedy family in particular he was an indispensable retainer, helping to produce a plausible denial to the persistent rumor that John F. Kennedy had not actually written his Pulitzer-prize-winning book, *Profiles in Courage*, or to smooth over the revelation that Teddy had been expelled from Harvard for hiring someone else to take his Spanish exam.

Inevitably, Vietnam occupies a very large space in this book—in fact, about a third of the total—in a richly filigreed account to which it is difficult to do justice in a review. Here Holbrooke, who played a large role in Southeast Asian policy in both the Johnson and Carter administrations, seems to have gotten deeply involved in the writing, largely to settle scores with his many enemies and critics. Broadly speaking, we have here the story of how Clifford moved away from his own "hawkish" position to a point where, as Lyndon Johnson's Secretary of Defense, he succeeded in convincing the President that there was no point in continuing to wage the war on the terms which he, Johnson, had chosen, but rather that we should seek a negotiated solution.

The particular crunch-point was the Tet offensive, which, though commonly conceded today to have been a military victory for the U.S., turned into a political disaster at home—and not only because the story was misreported by the American media (although it was). Rather, the top brass of the Army itself altered Clifford's perception of the battlefield situation by almost immediately demanding an additional 205,000 American soldiers. When Clifford asked for assurances that this would be the last installment, General Earle G. Wheeler, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, could offer none, nor—apparently—provide even an estimate of just how many more he might subsequently need. The last straw was Wheeler's assuring a group of senior presidential advisers that the purpose of the American forces in Vietnam was not to defeat the enemy but merely to prevent a Communist victory. "Then what in the name of God are five hundred thousand men out there doing—chasing girls?," Dean Acheson roared back.

THERE is much human drama in these pages, particularly in connection with Lyndon Johnson himself, who was skillfully maneuvered

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by Clifford, Acheson, Paul Warnke, and other trusted advisers into a position which ran against his deepest convictions, his pride, and his concern for his place in history. Though Johnson announced his intention not to seek reelection in a televised address on March 30, 1968, he periodically contemplated reversing himself once again. When Vice-President Hubert Humphrey, almost pathologically needful of the presidency but equally terrified of his boss, finally broke with Johnson by promising to halt the bombing as an "acceptable risk for peace," he drove the President to near-distraction. (If Clifford is right, on alternate days Johnson's preferred candidate in 1968 was Richard Nixon and not his own Vice President.)

Meanwhile, Clifford tells us, Nixon was covertly assuring the South Vietnamese government that they need not be particularly pliable or cooperative with the Johnson administration since they would get a better deal from its Republican successor. This made organizing the first Paris peace talks an excruciatingly difficult task, and bequeathed to the Nixon administration a dilemma largely of its own making. For—Clifford holds—instead of grasping the vast political space carved out for him, Nixon chose to resume the fruitless quest for a military victory until, some 30,000 more dead American servicemen later, he finally realized there was no choice but to return to where things stood on his Inauguration Day—that is, to cut a deal with Hanoi.

Some of this information has long been in the public domain, but at times Clifford's account, far from adding to our knowledge, almost deliberately puts it out of focus. Specifically, he makes it sound as if the choices before the United States in 1968 were simple ones—continue fighting the war by giving General Wheeler unlimited men and material, or go to Paris to work out an acceptable solution with the enemy. He is right to claim that he brought Johnson to the point of refusing the first option (though he was helped in this by Richard Russell, then chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, who told the White House that another 205,000 troops could not be "sold" to the Congress). But Clifford fails to appreciate why Johnson was so reluctant to embrace the second.

The harsh fact is that in 1968 the only thing to negotiate in Paris was an American abandonment of the Republic of Vietnam. Johnson instinctively understood this, which is why he kept trying to backpedal even after his March 30 speech. But the temporary compromise—stop the bombing, go to Paris, but keep up the American military presence in Vietnam—could not be sustained indefinitely. Some tough decisions had to be made. Johnson and Humphrey were lucky enough to leave office in January 1969, so that Nixon could be subsequently blamed for his failure to defy the law of gravity. Of course, to say this is in no way to excuse Nixon for his own maladroit management of the problem—including his failure to level with the American public, or even to force the Congress to share some of the responsibility for policy. Nor does it do justice to the problem which faced Johnson, Nixon, and surely would have faced Humphrey as well: how to disengage while maintaining a modicum of American credibility in the world.

Clifford says that Humphrey, if elected, had every intention of naming him Secretary of State. Instead, a new eight-year period of Republican ascendancy returned him to private life. Although briefly pressed back into government service as a presidential adviser and special envoy during the Carter administration, he was forced by deteriorating health to restrict and eventually curtail such activities. His comments on the Carter administration are not, in the event, very informative, not so much because his own role was limited as because of his inability to appreciate why the administration was such a failure. More seriously still, this book reflects not a particle of awareness of the drastic changes which have occurred in American political culture or within the Democratic party since 1968.

Clifford has no use for Ronald Reagan or his administration, to which he ascribes all of our current ills, real and imagined. But—very much to his credit—he deeply regrets the wide currency given to the term "amiable dunce," which he himself used to describe the President on what he had been assured was a completely off-the-record occasion. To the final page he remains blind to the fact that much of what happened in the Reagan administration, particularly the end of the cold war, represents the final success of policies in whose early design he played a vital role.

New Age Theology

THE SEARCH FOR GOD AT HARVARD. By ARI L. GOLDMAN. *Times Books. 283 pp. $20.00.*

Reviewed by JON D. LEVENSON

A RELIGION reporter for the New York *Times* and an Orthodox Jew, Ari L. Goldman came to Harvard Divinity School in the fall of 1985 seeking professional enrichment. Immediately upon his arrival, however, he found the institution "in the throes of its own administrative and philosophical nightmares": the dean had left, the acting dean had just died, and several important faculty positions were vacant. More ominously, the ethos of the school represented anything but the religiousness, sobriety, and self-restraint that the catalogue had led him to expect. Anticipating, for example, that the Divinity School Orientation Dance would be "an evening of hymns and mulled cider," Goldman and his wife were in for a shock:

> As we approached, music was blaring from the Refectory, and lights were flashing on and off. We checked the invitation to be

JON D. LEVENSON *is the Albert A. List Professor of Jewish Studies at Harvard Divinity School and the author, most recently, of* Sinai and Zion: An Entry into the Jewish Bible *and* Creation and the Persistence of Evil: The Jewish Drama of Divine Omnipotence, *both published by Harper & Row.*

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sure we were at the right place on the right night. What we encountered inside was spiked hair, fishnet stockings, short skirts, and couples, both heterosexual and homosexual, dancing to U2, Michael Jackson, and Duran Duran.

The countercultural features of Harvard Divinity School were not, however, altogether unwelcome to Goldman. It is true that he came "to study theology, not to become radicalized," but he reports that he has since found the sexual politics pervading that institution actually to have been a step or two ahead of the thinking of the rest of society. Furthermore, even during his stay at Harvard, Goldman increasingly found himself hungry for something more than dry academic study: he wanted to learn how adherents of other religions *feel*. He sought not just information and analysis, but spirituality. "It's here," a fellow student reassured him, "but it's hidden under a real thick layer of intellectualism and politics." One may doubt the implication that intellectual rigor is at odds with the life of the spirit, but Goldman's experience abundantly confirms the student's other point about politics displacing religiousness.

Already at orientation, Goldman saw that the pervasive politics of Harvard Divinity School exhibited what he, with admirable understatement, terms "a decided left-wing tilt." Indeed, his narrative suggests that political correctness has taken the place of theological orthodoxy. The chapel services, for example, were usually just a political forum on matters like the Sandinista revolution or gay rights. A course on "The American Catholic Bishops and Public Policy: A Feminist Perspective" proved to be one long diatribe against Catholic teaching on the vexed question of the status of the unborn, with Cardinals Ratzinger and O'Connor predictably cast in the role, as Goldman puts it, of "unmistakable villains." A female student complained to him that the women's-studies courses often involved "a declaration of war on men," a

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We all know that, by dint of constant repetition, white can be made to appear black, good can get transformed into evil, and myth may take the place of reality. Israel, with roughly one-thousandth of the world's population and with a similar fraction of the territory of this planet, seems to engage a totally disproportionate attention of the print and broadcast media. Unfortunately, much of what the media tell us – in reporting, editorializing, and in analysis – are endlessly repeated myths.

What are some of these myths?

■ **Myth:** The "Palestinians" are a nation and therefore deserving of a homeland.
Reality: The concept of Palestinian nationhood is a new one and had not been heard of until after the Six-Day War, when Israel, by its victory, came into the administration of the territories of Judea and Samaria (the "West Bank") and the Gaza strip. The so-called "Palestinians" are no more different from the Arabs in the neighboring countries of Lebanon, Syria and Jordan, than Wisconsinites are from Iowans.
■ **Myth:** Judea and Samaria (the "West Bank"), and the Gaza Strip are "occupied Arab territory".
Reality: All of "Palestine" – east and west of the Jordan River – was part of the League of Nations mandate. Under the Balfour Declaration all of it was to be the "national home for the Jewish people". In violation of this mandate, Great Britain severed the entire area east of the Jordan – about 75% of Palestine, and gave it to the Arabs, who created on it the kingdom of Transjordan. When Israel declared its independence in 1948, five Arab armies invaded the new country in order to destroy it at its very birth. They were defeated by the Israelis. The Transjordanians, however, remained in occupation of Judea and Samaria (the "West Bank") and East Jerusalem. They proceeded to drive all Jews from those territories and to systematically destroy all Jewish houses of worship and other institutions. The Transjordanians, now renamed "Jordanians" were the occupiers. Israel regained these territories following its victory in the Six-Day War and has administered them ever since. They have not been annexed. Their final status will be decided if and when the Arabs will ever sit down to talk peace with Israel.
■ **Myth:** Jewish settlements in Judea and Samaria (the "West Bank") are the "greatest obstacle to peace".
Reality: This is a totally new formulation, recently put forward by Secretary of State Baker. He and the president seem to be obsessed by it. Fewer than 100,000 Jews are settled in these territories, living among about 1.4 million Arabs. How can Jews living there be an obstacle to peace? Why *shouldn't* they live there? About 700,000 Arabs live in Israel proper. They are not an obstacle to peace and nobody, including the Israelis, consider them as such.
■ **Myth:** Israel is unwilling to yield "land for peace".
Reality: The concept that to the loser, rather than to the victor, belong the spoils is a radically new one, never before thought of in world history. Israel has emerged victorious in the five wars imposed on it by the Arabs. In order to make peace, it has returned over 90% of the territory occupied by it, specifically the vast Sinai Peninsula, to Egypt. That territory contained some of the most advanced military installations in the world, prosperous cities and settlements, and oil fields developed entirely by Israel that made it independent of petroleum imports. In the Camp David Accords (1983) Israel agreed to autonomy for Judea and Samaria (the "West Bank") with the permanent status to be determined after three years. No responsible Palestinian representation has been available to negotiate with Israel about this.

The greatest myth of all is that Israel's administration of the Gaza Strip and of Judea/Samaria is the root cause of the conflict between Arabs and Jews. But that is nonsense and flies in the face of historical reality. The Arab desire to obliterate the Jewish presence in Palestine, and since 1948 the Jewish state long predates that territorial administration. The root cause of the conflict is the total unwillingness of the Arabs to tolerate any "non-believers" to be in control of even one inch of what they consider "sacred Arab soil". And they don't just mean Judea/Samaria (the "West Bank") and the Gaza strip. They mean Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, the whole state of Israel. No change in the Arabs' attitude seems to be in the offing. But until there is such a change, no peace can possibly come to this troubled area.

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point vividly brought home when he happened upon a women's martial-arts course held in the formal reception room of the school:

> I peered in through a window in the door one day, and the instructor gave me a look that said, "You are the enemy. Get lost." Inside, several women were pummeling an imaginary man into submission on the floor.

The vacuum into which all this politicization and radicalization rushed was created in large part by the relative inattention of Harvard Divinity School to what one would have expected to be its central preoccupation: Christianity. The low estimation of traditional Catholicism is hardly surprising in an institution of venerable Protestant heritage: the only new element was the focus on sexual issues, plus the possibility of having dissident Catholics rather than Protestants offering the critique—a safer arrangement at all events. Goldman also notes a conspicuous lack of regard for evangelicalism, one bordering on intolerance, but this, too, is not unusual in a school whose Protestantism has always been liberal and very characteristically Northeastern.

What is altogether novel in the situation Goldman sketches was the neglect even of "mainline Protestantism," a neglect that he traces to a certain embarrassment. "Religious truth did not seem to exist at the Div School," Goldman writes, "only religious relativism," and the fear of giving offense in a diverse community was so overpowering "that Christian spirituality did not emerge." Goldman's keen reporter's eye focuses on an especially graphic illustration of the point: during a slide show on Christianity (in a course on "World Religions: Diversity and Dialogue"), "One of the high points was a slide showing Christians and Native American Indians raising a totem pole together, interfaith cooperation at its best"—but no help to Goldman in understanding "how Christians feel about themselves."

Despite these disappointments, Goldman finds his experience at Harvard Divinity School to have been highly rewarding. The courses he took were nearly always good, and those who taught them were expert, well-prepared, and often entertaining as well. The outstanding exception was his encounter with a priest who taught New Testament at a nearby Jesuit seminary and gave his students "a dose of Christian triumphalism, maybe even a touch of anti-Semitism": no relativist he!

One could wish that Goldman had refrained from the sophomoric exercise of offering thumbnail sketches of major religions—two pages each on Hinduism and Buddhism, three on Islam—but the excitement he felt in his year of studies is palpable and refreshing. More profound are his deftly drawn mini-portraits of students he came to know, some with life stories that are deeply moving. These portraits give a sense of the rich variety of religious expression in America today, even if much of that variety necessarily falls outside the boundaries of Harvard Divinity School.

BUT this is only part of *The Search for God at Harvard*. Goldman's own life story is so prominent throughout the book that one often has the sense of reading an autobiography rather than an account of a year on leave, as the author continually—and often awkwardly—shifts the focus of the narrative from one phase of his life to another.

The distinctive element in Goldman's personal story is his lifelong allegiance to Orthodox Judaism, and the book is dominated by a sense of the oddity of his identity as an Orthodox Jew both at Harvard Divinity School and at the New York *Times*. The particular form of Orthodoxy that claims Goldman's allegiance is one that is immersed in the Gentile world yet able to uphold traditional Jewish observance. Those he most admired as a student at Yeshiva University, he tells us, were "the people who succeeded in their professions while grappling with the constraints of *halakhah*, or Jewish law." His own grappling is a major subject of his frequent autobiographical flashbacks, and one of the messages of the book is that worldly success can be combined with traditional practice.

The problem is that too much of Goldman's grappling with *halakhah* amounts to a willingness—usually conflicted, to be sure—to throw off those traditional constraints. Already in his Orthodox high school, he is surreptitiously disobeying his rabbi's instructions by beginning his day with a newspaper instead of a prayer: "I just threw the paper away before I got to school." This is only the first of several clashes between Goldman's love of journalism and his commitment to traditional Jewish practice; in some of them, despite his emphasis on his Orthodoxy, journalism scores an impressive victory. Something similar may be said of his disarmingly honest account of his "grappling" with the issue of sexuality before marriage. In all these cases, Goldman's narrative undercuts his protest that he has been waging "battles" to remain Orthodox rather than compromising with modernity. The truth may be that he still does not see the full measure of incongruity between his behavior as he reports it and the Orthodox Judaism that he never lets us forget he professes.

The chief reason for this strange blindness is that, for all his complaints about religious relativism at Harvard Divinity School, Ari Goldman still instinctively thinks of Orthodox Judaism not in terms of its cognitive claims or behavioral norms, but rather as an odd but precious legacy of his family history. In particular, it was Orthodoxy that sustained him after his parents were divorced when he was six years old. He calls it "the one comfort of my childhood." "I clung—and I continue to cling—to it," he writes, "like a raft in a turbulent sea." But when the obvious suspicion arises that his motivation for observance is inadequate, he grabs for another life raft: "One of the lessons of Div School was that there are no wrong reasons."

It is here, if anywhere, that Goldman's Orthodoxy ought to have led him to challenge the prevailing

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ethos at Harvard Divinity School, instead of internalizing it. For the rabbinic tradition insists not only that religious observance be performed, but also that it be recognized as a divine commandment and thus practiced as an act of obedience and self-subordination. Goldman's understanding of religious practice is, in a sense, the reverse: he seems to view it as his personal means to self-realization. "[E]very time I have violated [the Sabbath]," he writes, "I have felt like I missed a great opportunity—the opportunity to be myself."

WHAT his year at Harvard Divinity School at its low point ought to have shown him is precisely the danger in this trivialization of religion, replacing theological depth with emotional uplift. When religious traditions retreat from a world of shared and authoritative meanings into the inner recesses of the self and its private history, other forces, not all of them benign, quickly fill the void, and it is not long before the traditions lose the priceless capacity to distinguish themselves from the ideologies of the moment. The success of political correctness in institutions like Harvard Divinity School, with its longstanding skepticism about traditional *religious* types of orthodoxy, signals a shift of historic proportions in American culture. It suggests that influential segments of liberal Protestantism are undergoing a process of ideologization that is distancing them not only from traditional Protestantism, but also from historic liberalism.

When Goldman ends his tale, he is again covering religion for the New York *Times*, with a vastly enriched knowledge of his subject but still no critical perspective on the experiential conception of religion that has been with him since childhood. When he sits in a black Baptist church, he relates, he "feel[s] swept away by the incredible combination of pain, joy, and music ricocheting through the building." In a Russian Orthodox church, he "feel[s] a sense of mystery and transcendence," and at a Quaker meeting he "feel[s] a serenity [he has] never known before." Toward the beginning of his tale, at a Roman Catholic funeral mass for the acting dean of Harvard Divinity School, he fantasizes that he, an Orthodox Jew, will take communion—in clear violation, it must be noticed, of the unqualified norms of *both* traditions. The suspicion grows that Ari Goldman's own lifelong focus on religious feelings at the expense of normative structures played a major role in his difficulty (which is hardly his alone) in finding God at Harvard.

Missing the Joke

PARLIAMENT OF WHORES. By P.J. O'ROURKE. *Atlantic Monthly Press. 320 pp. $19.95.*

Reviewed by DAVID BROCK

P.J. O'ROURKE's bestseller, *Parliament of Whores*, carries the ambitious subtitle, "A Lone Humorist's Attempt to Explain the Entire U.S. Government." The

DAVID BROCK *is an editor at* Insight *magazine.*

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book is disappointing on several counts, including these: it is not terribly funny, at least by O'Rourke standards, and it does not explicate anything new about the ways of Washington.

According to the dust jacket, O'Rourke is America's "hottest, hippest satirist, humorist and political sage." This was certainly a fitting appellation a few years back, when O'Rourke trained his eye on the inanities of the loony Left, from Massachusetts to Managua. In one of his classic pieces, "Ship of Fools," collected in *Republican Party Reptile* (1988), O'Rourke rendered the uproarious and reprehensible absurdity of the Volga Peace Cruise, a 16-day trip to the Soviet Union by a group of American peaceniks. More recently, his "New Enemies List," a provocative play on McCarthyism that appeared in the *American Spectator* and was roundly criticized in the liberal media for its "insensitivity," was an ingenious melding of common sense, an instinct for the jugular, and an easy jocularity.

But it is difficult to defend the dust-jacket boast on the evidence of this book, the product of O'Rourke's two-year stint in the nation's capital. The narrative, which occasionally snaps and crackles, but rarely pops, runs the gamut from an interpretation of the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution, to a tour of Congress and the Supreme Court, to descriptions of the failings of federal policies on agriculture, defense, drugs, poverty, and social security. Whether he is visiting a drug-infested Washington ghetto, or discussing the evils of federal subsidies to the middle class, O'Rourke's message is unitary, and nothing if not consistent. Everything the government does is either banditry or foolishness. "Giving money and power to the government is like giving whiskey and car keys to teenage boys."

The sentiment itself is hardly surprising. For some time, O'Rourke's notoriety and, indeed, his proven popularity with young audiences have depended significantly on his reputation as an unapologetic, common-sense conservative. Unlike his prior endeavors, however, this book is an attempt to come to grips with serious questions of public policy; as such, it supplies those of O'Rourke's fans who read him carefully with a more sustained view of what his brand of conservatism entails. Except for the most vulgar "leave-me-alone" libertarians—of whom there may admittedly be legions—such readers are likely to find the results unsatisfying.

Parliament of Whores has drawn appreciative reviews from the ponderous neoliberals at the Washington *Post* and the Washington *Monthly*, just the kind of people O'Rourke's punch has bruised in previous incarnations. There are two likely explanations for the enthusiasm. The first is merely stylistic. Washington is a decidedly unhip city, but in this book America's "hottest, hippest satirist" seems to have settled right into the colorless Beltway maw. His panache comes across as prosaic, his celebrated irreverence has turned mawkish. He actually appears to have enjoyed chatting up the gum-soled bureaucrats at the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, and he clearly empathizes with the supposedly overworked, underpaid, and understaffed Congressman whose day he chronicles.

THE second, and probably more important, reason is that O'Rourke's politics place him on a decent-sized patch of common ground with today's twisted liberalism, especially on issues of foreign policy—where he reveals himself to harbor deep-seated doubts about the projection of American power abroad—and individual privacy—where he argues against legal limitations on taking drugs and burning the flag. Then, too, O'Rourke freely engages in that favorite Beltway bloodsport, Reagan-bashing (as in, for example, "We had eight years of talk about patriotism and family values from a man who saw less combat in the service than I saw as a hippie. . .").

To explain Reagan, and everything else that is amiss in Washington, O'Rourke falls back on the uncomplicated (and unoffending) view that we have no one to blame but ourselves. The "whores" in the title are the public, not the capital's officialdom. "No," is his Pogo-like conclusion, "the guilty are to be found a bit closer to home, right in our own lap pools and open-plan gourmet kitchens."

What has happened to P.J. O'Rourke? The author himself once aptly explained the fix he has now fallen into: "Radicals and liberals and such want all jokes to have a 'meaning,' to 'make a point.' But laughter is involuntary and points are not." Although there are moments of antic laughter to be had in *Parliament of Whores*, in the end the points win, and for the most part they are sadly neither new nor persuasive.

Paradox of Place

THE SOUTHERN CONNECTION. By ROBERT B. HEILMAN. *Louisiana State University Press. 279 pp. $29.95.*

Reviewed by EDWARD ALEXANDER

> By millions of customers of the manufacturers of labor-saving devices it is regarded as lazy. By millions of residents of states where unemployment is unknown only in wartime, it is regarded as lamentably poor. . . . By readers of the liberal press it is regarded as doctrinaire, hyperemotional, and unintelligibly satisfied with itself. By millions of readers of best-sellers and subscribers to book clubs, it is regarded as unsophisticated, at best quaint and at worst susceptible to dictators. By millions of graduates and foster children of Columbia Teachers College it is regarded as spiritually backward.

THE antecedent of "it" in this passage is the South. The passage was written by the eminent literary scholar and critic Robert Heilman in 1947, in an essay ("The South Falls In") that deplores not only the hypocrisy of northern critics of the South but the tendency of the South itself, after long resis-

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tance to batterings from without, to bite "into the apple of conformity."

The North, Heilman predicted in that essay, would lose as much as the South if the latter were to surrender its distinctiveness, for liberal northerners might then be deprived of the pleasure to be had in the "easy psychology of melodrama, by which all evil is across the water." But Heilman also lamented the tendency of the South to export its best quality and bring in mediocrity. Already it was becoming as difficult to find a southern intellectual or poet at work in the South as to find choice strawberries in Louisiana or good peaches in Georgia. By the time Heilman was writing, Cleanth Brooks, Robert Penn Warren, Allen Tate, and John Crowe Ransom had assumed residence in New Haven and Minneapolis and Ohio, part of an unplanned literary population exchange that eventually would bring northern Marxists and genderology experts to transfer their imperial enterprise to the old tobacco plantation at Duke in North Carolina.

Heilman himself brought a northern perspective and a few northern prejudices to the South when, a native Pennsylvanian and recent Harvard Ph.D., he arrived in 1935 to take up a position in the English department of Louisiana State University. On their seventh day in Baton Rouge, he and his wife went to the Capitol to look in on a meeting of the state legislature which U.S. Senator and former Governor Huey Long was scheduled to attend. The opening essay of *The Southern Connection* describes Heilman's "one experience of seeing a single political leader wholly in command," a very brief experience as it happened because Long's exit from the chamber that day was instantly followed by his assassination. "We wondered, Is this the way they always settle political differences in Louisiana? How would it be in higher education?" But Heilman soon came to see the Long phenomenon as involving something more complicated and ambiguous than simple regional delinquency.

THE first section of this collection of seventeen essays about the South, written over four decades, describes the atmosphere in Baton Rouge and LSU shortly after Long's death. How was it, the author asks, that Long, a populist picaro and (to some) a Machiavellian, should have brought to an obscure university in a poor southern town such extraordinary talents as Warren, Brooks, the political philosopher Eric Voegelin, and so remarkable a journal as the *Southern Review*? The puzzling relation between Louisiana's populist revolution and the very highbrow literary and intellectual flowering of its state university began to be understood by Heilman only after he had returned, in 1948, to the North, where liberal virtue and the conformity of dissent pressed harder upon free spirits. "May there have been," he asks from the perspective of decades, "a subterranean kinship between the freedom conducive to art and thought, and a statewide sociopolitical easygoingness with its obvious built-in risks of messes, rackets, and worse?"

The book's second, longer section offers critical essays on southern writers and their works. Here Heilman deals with the relation between the southern Agrarian movement and European culture, the enduring value of Cleanth Brooks's critical essays in *The Well-Wrought Urn* (1947), and the fiction of Robert Penn Warren, Eudora Welty, and Katherine Anne Porter. In the conception of the South that emerges from these essays, the principle of paradox is pervasive, just as it was in the literary considerations of the major New Critics of the South: Brooks, Warren, and Heilman himself.

One might start with the paradox of place. I have already mentioned the emigration of poets and intellectuals. Indeed, of the southern Agrarians and their advocacy of "a southern way of life against what may be called the American or prevailing way" (in the words of their 1930 manifesto, *I'll Take My Stand*), it has justly been said that

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although, metaphorically speaking, they would die in Dixie, they often lived in the North, whose polyglot, industrial, urban, rationalist, materialist, and capitalist character they loved to denounce. Once, at the University of Minnesota, a professor of French asked me, during a doctoral examination, why Stendhal had said that he could imagine no worse fate than being sentenced to live in Cincinnati. Before I could reply, Samuel Monk, a transplanted Alabamian professor and one of the original contributors to the *Southern Review*, intervened: "Because Minneapolis hadn't been invented yet!" Heilman recalls that when a professional meeting came to its end in Chicago, Robert Penn Warren would moan: "Well, nothing to do now but go back to Minneapolis and wait for the first blizzard."

Although he is overwhelmingly sympathetic to the symbolic force of the Agrarian movement's belief in the ennobling influence of soil on soul, Heilman insinuates a criticism of its distance from stubborn actualities. He had himself grown up in a farming family in eastern Pennsylvania, and found the agrarian life far from ideal. Could it be that its parallel in the South possessed virtues largely absent in Pennsylvania? Or was it that most of the contributors to *I'll Take My Stand* really knew little of "the sheer difficulty and often hardship of farming life"?

But the central paradoxes of the South, according to Heilman, are the combination of "an almost Oriental ancestor-worship" with a love of the "modern"; a constant examination of the southern birthright combined with harking after the fleshpots; and a greater illiteracy than any other part of the country combined with "a highly disciplined literacy" that produced a literary flowering unequaled by any other American region.

Within this last paradox Heilman detects another. This is the way in which the type of literary analysis developed by southern critics who were often scorned as "reactionaries" or even "fascists" by their cruder liberal detractors had the effect of democratizing literary study. For by their stress on the analysis of concrete texts, Ransom, Tate, Brooks, and Warren created a far more competent "general reader" than the older, "historical" critics had envisioned or desired; and by adhering to Tate's precept that "critical style ought to be as plain as the nose on one's face," they not only rescued criticism from the dry-as-dust manner of the historical school but also retarded its infection by the opaque pseudo-jargon of the "theorists."

HEILMAN'S elucidation of the southern critics' idea of poetry as a means of universalizing, through the instrument of form, emotions and experiences that may originate in the self, or the culture, or the tribe, is of special value in an era as profoundly infected by determinisms of race, class, and "gender" as is ours. For many of our literary theorists, the crucial questions about a work concern its supposed origins: What are its author's class background, his race, his politics, his sexual preferences? In place of the New Critics' concept of a unified domain of literary excellence, we now have the racial theory of literary creativity, the ovarian-testicular theory, the class theory, and so on *ad infinitum*. By contrast, Heilman shows how the New Critical stress on the work itself—"not divorced from diverse genetic influences, but transcending them through formal properties, not timebound, that determine its quality"—provided a way out of the prison of relativism, "a way of distinguishing between Shakespeare and Glapthorne," and also undermined the utilitarian conception of poetry as a servile instrument of morality, religion, or ideology.

That a universal principle of literary excellence should have arisen from so contentiously regional a school of writers is perhaps the ultimate paradox of the southern literary temper. If that temper emerges in Heilman's portrait looking a bit more sweet and reasonable than it did in its years of trial and combat, that is partly a result of the passage of time, but still more a tribute to the eloquence, urbanity, and moral poise of the author of this book.

Left, Right & Center

WHY AMERICANS HATE POLITICS. By E.J. DIONNE, JR. *Simon & Schuster. 430 pp. $22.95.*

Reviewed by JOSHUA MURAVCHIK

A great improvement befell American journalism in the late 1980's with the departure of Sidney Blumenthal and the arrival of E.J. Dionne, Jr. at the Washington *Post*. Although Blumenthal's work usually ran in the "Style" section of the paper, while Dionne's has appeared mostly in the news pages, the beat they have covered is largely the same: the ideological side of politics. But what a difference between them: Blumenthal's (presumably self-assigned) mission was to skewer the Right, especially neoconservatives, and to do so in a manner uninhibited by any scruple of balance, fairness, or accuracy. (See my review of his book, *The Rise of the Counter-Establishment*, in the October 1986 COMMENTARY.) Dionne, by contrast, is at pains to report faithfully the views of the groups and individuals he covers.

This penchant for fairness and accuracy, and a lively interest in political ideas, equip Dionne well to chronicle contemporary political history. This is partly what he has done in *Why Americans Hate Politics*, and the account he gives is valuable and instructive. But, alas, it is not all he has done. As the book's strained title suggests, he also has attempted some ambitious theorizing, which does not succeed nearly so well.

A child of the 60's, Dionne is especially good at conveying what so many others have failed to recognize or else to acknowledge: the powerful impact of the New Left on all that followed it. "The New Left," he writes, "played an immensely important and . . . widely underestimated role in shaping and transforming both liberalism and our political culture." One reason for the underestimation may be

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that the New Left self-destructed before it was a decade old. Nevertheless, as Dionne aptly notes, "at the very moment when most of the 'formal' institutions of the New Left, including SDS [Students for a Democratic Society], drifted into irrelevancy, the movement's ideas were beginning to have a real impact on mainstream liberalism."

Within the Democratic party, the impact was both sociological and political in nature. "New party rules that emphasized participation led to an increasing role for the well-to-do and a declining role for the working and lower middle classes," Dionne reports. Still more significantly,

> the antiwar movement did allow the Left and its ideas back into the Democratic party. . . . Suddenly, a critique of American foreign policy that had been off-limits was very much part of the party's normal discourse. . . . By 1970, the antiwar forces held a majority among congressional Democrats. . . . Cold-war liberalism . . . moved from being the Democratic party's overwhelmingly dominant tendency to representing the view of an influential but embattled minority.

Still, although the New Left—or, in its watered-down version, the New Politics—vanquished "cold-war" liberalism, it could not gather enough support to take power in the country at large. Instead, ironically, it paved the way for a quarter of a century of Republican control of the White House. "The New Left wage[d] war against the paternalistic liberal state and defeat-[ed] it," notes Dionne. "The Right picked up the pieces."

Conservatism's electoral success was made possible not just by the works of the New Left, but also by the intellectual reinvigoration of conservatism itself, which Dionne carefully traces. He records the contributions of traditionalists like Russell Kirk and William F. Buckley, Jr., with their emphasis on piety, duty, and virtue; of the libertarian economists Friedrich von Hayek and Ludwig von Mises, with their surpassing faith in free markets; and of *National Review* editor Frank Meyer, whose project

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was a "fusion" of these two contradictory strains.

This is an interesting account, though I was not close enough to the conservative movement in those years to judge Dionne's accuracy with confidence. I feel better equipped to assess his version of the history of neoconservatism, and this falls wide of the mark, perhaps because he relies too heavily on Peter Steinfels's 1979 book on the subject.

One of the difficulties in any account of neoconservatism is that it was an ideology never proclaimed; even the term itself was a hostile invention, coined by one group of liberals (or socialists) to stigmatize another in a conflict over the meaning and direction of liberalism. As Dionne tells it, that conflict in the first place was over economic policy: neoconservatism "first became visible as a movement in domestic politics" in the mid-1960's through the efforts of the quarterly magazine *Public Interest* to challenge the social-welfare programs of the New Deal/Fair Deal/Great Society.

In fact, however, the main conflict within liberalism at the time was not over domestic economic policy but over the Vietnam war, which was being prosecuted by the Johnson-Humphrey administration and was opposed from the Left by a growing number of activists, largely affluent and college-educated. When this opposition to the war carried over into the Democratic primaries in the 1968 presidential campaign, the antiwar faction began to refer to itself as representing a New Politics, a grandiloquent way of asserting that it stood for something other than liberalism as liberalism was then known.

But this nomenclature soon proved a liability, as it hinted too directly at the link between the New Politics and the New Left and offered an inviting target for the telling epithet, "radic-libs," coined by Richard Nixon's Vice-President, Spiro Agnew. Soon New-Politics advocates were disclaiming the label, asserting that they themselves were the true liberals, whereas the Johnson/Humphrey Democrats were not liberals at all but neoconservatives. Almost to a man, those so labeled repudiated the term, although as the years went by most gradually came to acquiesce in it.

From the outset neoconservatism was distinguished by a hostility, on the international front, to Communism and, on the domestic scene, to the radical Left and all its works, especially its espousal of racial preferences, its intolerance of dissenting opinion, and its denigration of the American experience. But on economic issues, notwithstanding the indisputably important role of the *Public Interest*, the movement was if anything more faithful than New-Politics liberalism to the traditional Keynesian policies of the Democratic party. This was because the neoconservatives saw blue-collar workers as their natural allies against the college-educated New-Politics bunch. When Senator Henry "Scoop" Jackson, then the preeminent neoconservative hero, ran for President in 1976, he boasted the highest rating of any member of the Senate on the AFL-CIO's scorecard of "correct" legislative votes—the purest measure of Keynesianism.

It was not until the 1980's that most neoconservatives moved to the Right on domestic issues, impressed by the success of Reaganomics against the stagflation that had so overmastered the Carter administration, and influenced as well by the experience of collaborating with more traditional conservatives. Thus, one could say that Dionne errs less in describing where the neoconservatives ended up than in explaining how they got there. This would be of lesser moment if it did not obscure two important facts: that the original tenets of neoconservatism—internationalism, anti-Communism, equal rights, civil liberties—were once the distinguishing hallmarks of American liberalism itself, and that those who in the late 60's succeeded in wresting sole possession of the liberal name had actually come to embrace positions—isolationism, anti-anti-Communism, preferential treatment by race—once recognized as illiberal.

Still, despite its flaws, Dionne's record of these debates is a useful one. Not so his scantily supported claim that "Americans hate politics."

Here, contrary to the many commentators, Right and Left, who bemoan the lack of clear choice in American politics and wish that our heterogeneous parties would sport the sharper ideological edges of European parties, Dionne puts forward the original argument that American politics is *too* polarized. Ours, he laments, is an "either/or" politics, instead of a "both/and" politics. We speak of "issues"—thus encouraging disputation—when we ought to speak of "problems" that might be solved by reasoning together.

Polarization, moreover, impels us to focus on less important rather than more important questions:

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market. While Left and Right argued about racial quotas, the average take-home pay of *all* Americans stagnated. While Michael Dukakis and George Bush discussed Willie Horton and the Pledge of Allegiance, the savings and loan industry moved inexorably toward collapse. While politicians screamed at each other about the death penalty, more and more children were being born into an urban underclass whose life chances were dismal. . . . While veterans of the 60's continued to debate the meaning of the Vietnam war, Communism collapsed and a new world—probably *more* dangerous and certainly less predictable than the old—was born.

Aside from the remarkable claim that the world will be more dangerous with the demise of Communism, this litany raises two questions. First, is not Dionne himself constructing false "either/or" dichotomies by suggesting that we may be concerned about, say, getting mugged or about the doctor's bill that will ensue therefrom, but not about both? Second, why are questions of justice, security, and morality less "real," less important, than material questions?

It would seem that, for all his fairness as a reporter, Dionne has ideological proclivities of his own. He wishes that American voters would hew more closely to their economic interests because this would lead them to vote for liberals or Democrats. And he wishes that liberals would pursue a more radical economic policy, one sufficiently appealing to the masses to overcome their attraction to conservative positions on social issues.

But what, then, of the evils of polarization? Apparently, there are two kinds of polarization, a bad kind caused by divisiveness over social and cultural issues, and a good kind caused by divisiveness over economic issues. This would explain Dionne's otherwise mystifying assertion that the election of Bernard Sanders, "an independent socialist," to the U.S. House of Representatives, and of Paul Wellstone, an "appealingly eccentric left-wing professor," to the U.S. Senate, somehow expresses the voters' "demand for an end to ideological confrontations." Quite the contrary.

Nor are Sanders and Wellstone the only polarizers who excite Dionne's sympathy. He writes:

> The Reverend Jesse Jackson's triumphant tour through Wisconsin . . . was, in many ways, the [1988] campaign's high point. . . . Many [whites who] had voted for Ronald Reagan in 1984 . . . cheered Jackson's defense of the common people . . . [and] his calls for a coalition of "working people" against the "merger maniacs" at the investment banking houses. In Jackson's formulation, whites of modest means were no less the victims of racism than blacks. . . . The Jackson campaign in Wisconsin was simultaneously a political drive aimed at creating a coalition of protest on the Left and a quasi-religious revival in which blacks and whites were seeking to absolve and be absolved of past sins.

In this passage enthusiasm overwhelms journalistic detachment and we can clearly see that there is more than one E.J. Dionne. There is the fair-minded political reporter who has written a commendable chronicle of some recent political history. And then there is the man of political conviction. The second has written an essay which he believes to be about the American people's frustration with politics, but I believe it is about his frustration with the politics of the American people.

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